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ABSTRACT

Designed to teach students to become selective and discriminating users of television who will be better able to affect changes in programming, this bulletin offers a series of suggested activities and lesson plans for teachers to use in planning instructional programs around television for students in kindergarten through grade 9. This course of study offers information about the role of television in our lives, programming and production aspects, and the history and development of television. Resource materials, classroom activities, and suggestions on how parents and teachers can use television with youngsters are also provided. In addition to an understanding of how television developed and how it works, students completing this course of instruction should come away with the following basic concepts: (1) television brings people together; (2) television reflects and influences society; (3) television instructs directly and indirectly; (4) television affects our actions as consumers; (5) television affects personal development; (6) our actions affect television; and (7) how television developed and how it works. An extensive list of reference materials and a list of works cited is appended. (MES)

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TV and Growing Up

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TV and Growing Up

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Foreword

There is a considerable body of research which describes the effects of television on children. The research tells us that television has affected student reading, leisure time, buying habits, values, clothing, diets, heroes, interpersonal relationships, sleeping schedules, physical fitness and a host of other factors which underscore the medium's power.

The school's role for a generation has been ambiguous because what television teaches may modify our behaviors in positive ways as well as offer antisocial models. It is the pro-social strength of television which schools need to emphasize through planned instruction in which television becomes a discreet area of inquiry.

The ultimate goal of this bulletin is to prepare students to become more selective and discriminating users of television and to become viewers who will not only be more critical of programs offerings, but who will be better able to affect changes in programming. This bulletin offers a series of suggested activities and lesson plans for that purpose. While some of the lesson plans are clearly marked for certain grade levels, most suggestions are intended for teacher adaptation. The background materials, activities, lesson plans and related resources are applicable to the elementary, intermediate and junior high school and intended as a springboard for the creative teacher.

Charlotte Frank
Executive Director

Acknowledgments

Television and Growing Up is a project of the Division of Curriculum and Instruction, Charlotte Frank, Executive Director. Morris Freedman, Director of the Office of Curriculum Development and Support, initiated the project and provided overall supervision.

This bulletin was researched and written by Marianne David who was assigned to the Division as a special consultant. Additional materials were written by Maureen Maguire, curriculum specialist with the Office of Curriculum Development and Support.

Members of the Television Curriculum Advisory Committee served as an excellent resource for shaping the emphasis and organization of the publication. The Committee included:

Peter O. Almond	Carnegie Council on Children
Bert Briller	Television Information Office
Betty Felton	United Parents Association of NYC, Inc.
Jack Herman	Community School District No. 6
Phil Lange	Teachers College, Columbia University
Gloria Kirshner	Teachers Guides to Television
Robert Oksner	Children's Television Workshop
Kathryn Moody	New York Council on Children's Television
Dorothy Cohen	Bank Street College of Education

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Members of the staff of the Curriculum Production Unit, Alaire Mitchell, Unit Head, who worked on this book were:

Maureen Maguire	Book design and production
Conrad Nunnally	Mechanical art
Regina Denenberg	Original cartoons
Deborah Epstein	Composition and editorial assistance
Regina Barnes	Proofreading

We are especially grateful to the many publishers and professional cartoonists who gave us permission to use their work.

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Stan and Janice Berenstain, *Good Housekeeping*. (p. 9)

Glenn R. Bernhardt, *Phi Delta Kappan*. (p. 44)

David Celsi. © 1979. (p. 12)

Chicago Tribune/New York News Syndicate. (pp. 28, 52, 60)

E.P. Dutton and Co., Inc. *The Crowd Catchers: Introducing Television* by Robert Lewis Shayon. © 1973. (p. 115)

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The New Yorker. © 1971, 1974. (pp. 1, 3, 31, 43)

The New York Times. © 1963, 1978. (pp. 58, 87, 107)

Pantheon Books, a Division of Random House, Inc. From *The Family Guide to Children's Television* by Evelyn Kaye; illustrated by Edward Frascino. © 1974. (pp. 30, 38, 40, 44, 50, 61, 87, 90)

Maurice Sendak. © 1974. (pp. 33, 41)

TV Guide Magazine, April, 1980. © by Triangle Publications, Inc.

Video-Info Publications. From *The Video Guide*, Second Edition. © 1979. (p. 111)

What Students Can Learn from TV and Growing Up

Designed especially for students in kindergarten through ninth grades, *TV and Growing Up* is intended to guide the teacher in creating an instructional program around television. This course of study offers information about the role of television in our lives, programming and production aspects, and the history and development of television. Resource materials, classroom activities, and suggestions on how parents and teachers can use television with youngsters are also provided.

Students completing this course of instruction should come away with seven basic concepts.

TV brings people together

TV brings viewers direct, personal contact with other cultures.

Worldwide coverage of news and sports events builds a common, global background of current information and shared experiences.

Specific programs, personalities and symbols from TV form part of our shared cultural experience.



TV reflects and influences society

TV shows reflect society in varying degrees of accuracy. When TV distorts reality through stereotypes, (sexual, ethnic, or occupational) unrealistic role models, and simplistic solutions to complex problems, it reinforces negative and unrealistic tendencies within our society.

When TV accurately reflects true human situations and responses, it reinforces positive action.

TV instructs directly and indirectly

TV instructs directly in various subject areas through its educational programs. (*Sesame Street*, *Nova*, *Once Upon a Classic*, etc.)

TV instructs indirectly through learning opportunities implicit in all TV experiences; e.g., use of language, role models for social behavior; information through images. (A picture taken live in Alaska gives information on climate and geography.)

TV affects our actions as consumers

TV advertising influences which products we eat, drink and buy.

TV advertising and program content influence our lifestyle: how we dress; how we decorate our homes; what we do in our leisure time.

TV affects personal development

Research tells us that excessive television viewing promotes passivity. The number of hours we watch determines the time we have left for relationships with people, reading, physical activity, cultural and creative projects.

TV influences our values and attitudes through the role models we choose to emulate and the solutions to human problems we feel are effective.

Viewing violence on TV tends to promote aggressive social behavior. Viewing humanistic behavior tends to promote tolerance and co-operation.

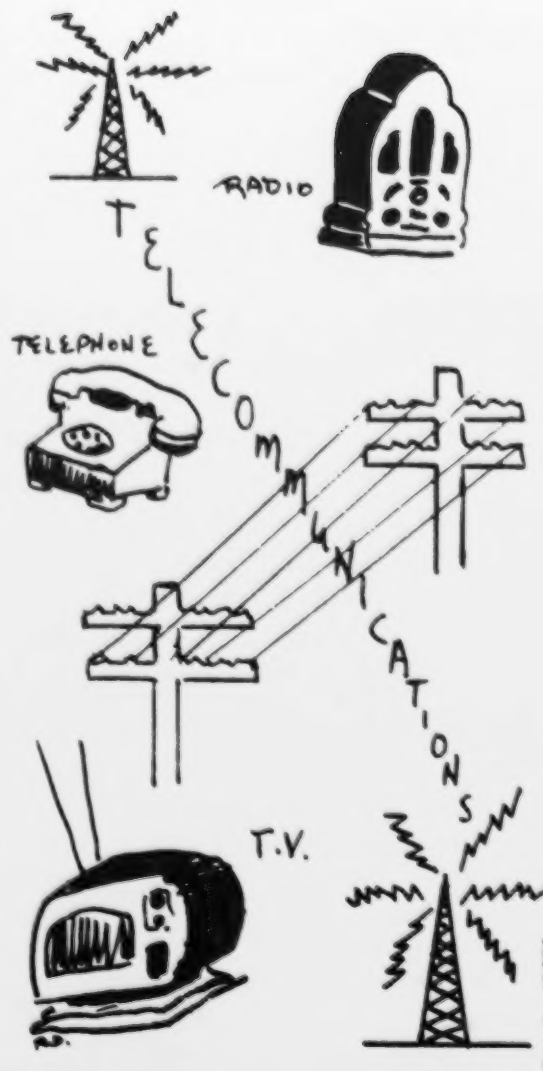
Selectivity — in what we watch and how much we watch — contributes to personal development.

Critical television viewing can help to clarify our values and opinions about current issues and events.

Our actions affect TV

Through their viewing choices and responses to advertising, viewers affect TV.

By organizing into groups, viewers can exert pressure to secure changes in TV programming and orientation, as well as in advertising procedures.



How TV developed and how it works

TV is a relatively new medium whose impact is growing. It works through transmitted electronic signals on specific wave frequencies.

TV stations are licensed by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), which sets rules for broadcasting. The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) sets rules for which products may not be advertised and which claims are fraudulent and deceptive.

Commercial programs are selected and scheduled mainly to attract audiences who will buy advertisers' products.

Public TV provides educational and cultural programs as alternatives to commercial TV. (Some commercial companies, however, sponsor public TV programs.)

Different formats are used for various kinds of programs: news, documentaries, cartoons, soap operas, situation comedies, talk shows, game shows, sports events.

Three or more cameras working in combination produce the images which we see on the TV screen.

Many different occupations are involved in TV production: camera operator, director, performer, advertiser, animator, editor, make-up artist, set designer, script writer, video person, audio person.

"We'll return after these messages . . ."

For thirty years Americans have watched history in the making on TV. They have seen six presidential inaugurations, the Army McCarthy hearings, several moon walks, President Kennedy's funeral, President Nixon's China trip, and the Watergate investigation.

The initial arrangement for the historic encounter between Prime Minister Begin and President Sadat was made through Walter Cronkite on CBS-TV.

Heavy TV viewers tend to be more distrustful of the world around them and more frightened of getting mugged than people who don't watch much TV.

The average 12-year-old has already watched 101,000 violent episodes on TV, including 13,400 deaths.

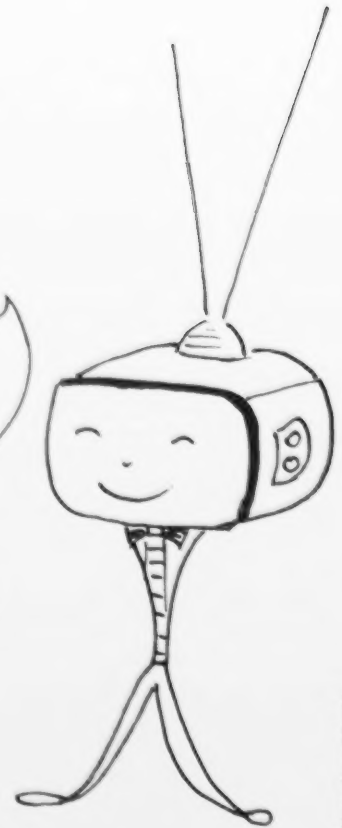
In all, 130 million Americans watched at least part of *Roots*. On the third day of the series sales of the book hit a one-day peak of 67,000 copies (list price: \$12.50). In New York City thieves broke a display window in the Doubleday bookstore and stole all copies of *Roots*.

By high school graduation, the average American youngster has spent 10,000 hours in the classroom and 15,000 in front of the TV set.

The average American child sees about 250,000 TV commercials by age 10.

TV serves as a tool for rehabilitative therapy. (For example, at the Department of Physical Medicine, University of Minnesota Hospitals, occupational therapists and physicians have set up a stationary bicycle attached to a TV set. The TV set works only when the patient undergoing rehabilitation pedals the bicycle hard enough.)

Children's cartoons contain more acts of violence per show than any other type of program on TV.



Denenberg/OCDS

Introduction



Dana Fradon/New Yorker

"You know, when you come to think of it, all they really lack is a television set."

- How is TV part of our environment?
- To what extent does TV shape our lives? Explain.
- Are children really more accustomed to images than to words? Why?
- How is our world becoming a "global village"?

TV as environment

The images and sounds of television surround us and involve us. Are they part of our environment, shaping us in ways we cannot even perceive? Television has become the trend setter, the informer, the entertainer, the educator and the mass sales agent of our society. Families have changed their sleeping and eating schedules to accommodate television. They have learned to use it as their companion and electronic baby sitter. People today read less than they used to; they also socialize less. But they watch a lot of television. The average American household is turned on to television about six hours a day – the equivalent of 92 full days out of the year!

TV and children

Commercial television began in 1947, and with it the "TV generation." By 1950 television was already becoming a major force in our society. Since then, television has consumed more time in the lives of preschool children than anything except sleep. It has exerted an influence as powerful as that of parents and school combined. Children's toys, games and conversations revolve around what they see and hear on television. So do many of their values, attitudes and behavior patterns. How can it be otherwise, if children begin to absorb television as babies!

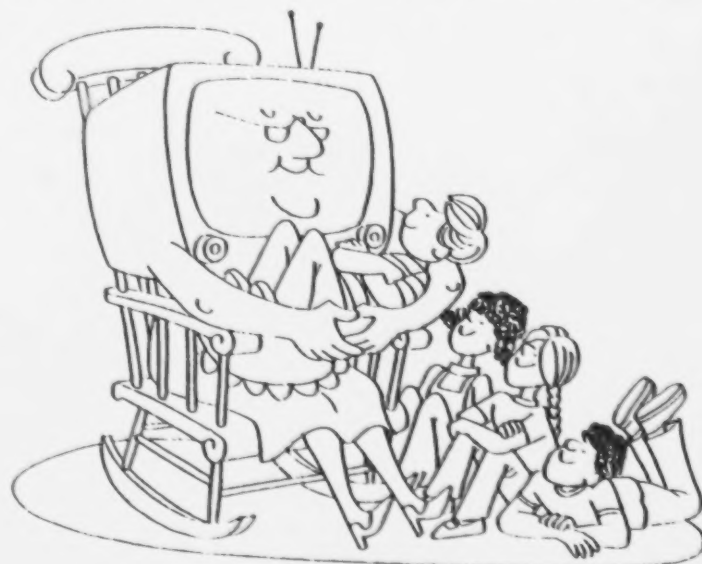
TV and school

Are children really "getting smarter"? Many educators feel that they are, and that television is the reason why "today's children under the age of five and one-half know more than their peers twenty or more years ago."

IQ scores for preschoolers are rising. Yet tests given to these same preschoolers around the time they begin school show their scores dropping off to earlier normal IQ levels. The indicators are that "the beneficial aspects of television are experienced primarily, perhaps exclusively, in the preschool years." Could this mean that

school fails to build on the knowledge that children acquire through television?

Dr. Robert Thorndike, past president of the American Educational Research Association maintains that our present educational system has not yet come to grips with the phenomenon of television in children's lives. "We should recognize," he says, "that with television the world of the child has changed . . ." Nourished on images before they come to school, today's children are expected to change their orientation and assimilate a form of learning which differs from the one taught to them by television.



Roy Dory/Macmillan

A revolution in perception

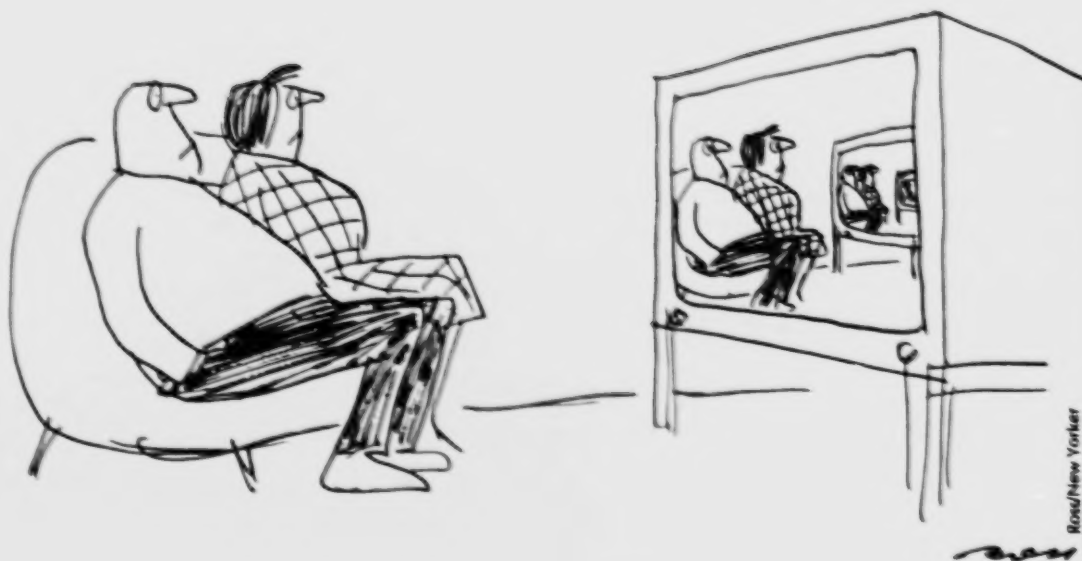
On a warm July day in 1969, Americans watched man take his first step on the moon, just as hundreds of millions of people around the world were receiving the same images on their television screens. The thrill shared by all made us conscious of ourselves as inhabitants of a "global village."

Our new global perception represents a break with the past, a break not unlike the one caused by the advent of printing in the fifteenth century. Before print, most communication was oral, therefore people's hearing was highly developed. With print media, people became more visually oriented, also less spontaneous. Now television, following movies, has again changed the nature of communication. By transmitting images and sounds instantaneously and simultaneously, television has brought about a revolution in our perception. Our responses are changing, and so is our mode of grasping and coping with our rapidly evolving reality.

Some experts in the field of media predict even more far-reaching effects of new hardware before the millenium. The boom in cable television, the increase in sales of VCR's, and the sophistication of video games are only a few of the factors which will affect the culture and lifestyle of our students in the next 20 years.

"... one might say that we live in a videosphere ..."

Gene Youngblood



Ross/New Yorker

1. The Need to Learn about TV

Once one recognizes that television teaches — not only via channels specifically labeled educational but across the entire spectrum of public and commercial programming — it becomes clear that TV has drastically altered familial education and has “fundamentally modified the context in which all schooling proceeds.”

*Lawrence Cremin
President of Teachers College
Columbia University*

"Start where the child is."
—John Dewey



Avatar

- Do we become what we behold? Explain.
- Can you name some favorite TV role models? Why are they so appealing?
- What positive identifications can children form from TV?
- What are some negative identifications?

How does TV teach?

Today's children absorb television before they can talk, let alone read. They learn directly, through sounds and images, about people, places and events. Television also provides role models by exposing children to a great variety of life styles and situations. "Modeling" occurs simply by watching others. Psychologist Albert Bandura illustrates modeling with this story:

A lonesome farmer decided to get a parrot for company. After acquiring the bird the farmer spent many long evenings teaching the parrot the phrase, "Say Uncle." Despite the devoted tutorial attention, the parrot proved totally unresponsive and finally the frustrated farmer got a stick and struck the parrot on the head after each refusal to produce the desired phrase. But the visceral method proved no more effective than the cerebral one, so the farmer grabbed his feathered friend and tossed him in the chicken house. A short time later the farmer heard a loud commotion in the chicken house and upon investigation found that the parrot was pummeling the startled chickens on the head with a stick and shouting, "Say Uncle!"¹

Since children parrot what they see and hear on television, responding to what appeals to them, parents can know right away what their child likes. Words, jingles, tunes and symbols of all kinds are learned through repetition. Standard formats, familiar speech patterns, and especially familiar television characters help children integrate new information.

Above all, television doesn't disapprove or punish. Because viewing is not compulsory, there is no fear of failure connected with television.

Television is picture oriented, tells stories and is utterly episodic. Therefore it makes no demands on the child-viewer to decode written symbols (as he must do in school), it does not force him to make causal relationships between events (as he must do in math class), nor does it require any process of conceptualization.

Television is a fact of life. On the one hand we may marvel at the breadth of experience it opens up for the child and the intimacy of its news coverage. On the other hand we must be aware of the relationship between heavy TV viewing and aggressive behavior, of the destructive effects of TV viewing on the powers of creativity and imagination.

The episodic nature of television also has its effects on the child's thought processes. By the very illogical way in which commercials are backed up between segments of widely differing programs, television is teaching the child to be diffuse and fragmented in his thought processes, rather than logical and sequential. Moreover, by the very nature of the 22-minute situation comedy, television is "teaching" that life can be cut up into solvable little problems.



Roy Doty/Macmillan

Resources:

- Fiske, Edward B. "Values Seen in Conflict," *The New York Times*, April 10, 1980, section 12, p. 1.
- Baran, S.J. "Prosocial and Antisocial Television Content and Modeling by High and Low Self-esteem Children." *Journal of Broadcasting* (1974) 18:481-495.
- Poulos, R.W., Rubinstein, E.A., and Liebert, R.M. "Positive Social Learning," *Journal of Communication* (1975) 25:4, pp. 90-97.
- "Parents Television Guide: Useful Tips about rewarding ways to watch and discuss television with your children." Quaker Oats Company, P.O. Box 4504, Chicago, Ill. 60677.

Lessons from Sesame Street

Until *Sesame Street* came along in 1968, no one really knew if television could benefit children. Today, nine million preschoolers in this country watch *Sesame Street* in addition to several million older children and adults. *Electric Company*, its sister program for grade school children, has seven million viewers.

These children can name parts of the body, geometric forms and letters. They can match by form, classify and sort, as well as understand relational terms and the role of community members. What is amazing is that even very young children can make these gains in knowledge. Gerald Lesser, one of the founding fathers of *Sesame Street*, explains:

... when we used existing guidelines of "normal" development, we found that we constantly underestimated how much three, four and five year-olds could learn from *Sesame Street*, and did not even have the foresight to anticipate that our most responsive audience would be children even younger than three years of age ... we must begin to appreciate how well and how rapidly children can learn at very young ages, especially from visual media.²

Twelve years have established *Sesame Street* as a part of our culture and children's growing up. Oscar and Big Bird are almost as familiar as Santa Claus. The Muppets have even graduated to nighttime TV and adult audiences.



Parents' roles

Sesame Street, in spite of its attractiveness and pedagogical soundness, cannot do the job of educating children alone. Research has shown that children benefit from *Sesame Street* in a significant way only when the parent is present to answer questions and share in the child's enjoyment. In 1975 a reevaluation of the *Sesame Street* test data was made with two groups of children. One group received a lot of attention, while the other group got none. After a year of viewing, the children who were not encouraged to view showed a slight increase in comprehension of numbers and letters, and the ability to recognize letters. But the encouraged children, on the other hand, showed improvement along a whole range of number and letter skills.³

Resources:

To help children build on the knowledge gained from viewing *Sesame Street* and *The Electric Company*, the following publications are available for parents and teachers from: CTW Community Education Services, Department A, 1 Lincoln Plaza, New York, NY 10023.

Sesame Street Activities (in English or Spanish) @\$2.00 or \$1.60 in bulk

Muppet Gallery @ \$1.00 or \$.80 in bulk

Share the Street (for children with special needs) @ \$2.00 or \$1.60 in bulk

Electric Company Guide Ditto Master: Book and Teacher's Handbook (C-39 Birmingham, Alabama 35283) @ \$17.95 or in bulk

A note from one of our viewers

I feel every day as if I'm competing with characters on Sesame Street . . . whenever I start a project or a lesson I have the children's attention for about two minutes. Then, unless I'm really entertaining, or unless I've stayed up the night before to make up some sort of picture display, or unless I've arranged for some sort of film or slide show, I lose them. I can see them dropping out. I'm not interesting any more, and they're waiting for something new to come on.⁴

(Third-grade teacher)



It turns out that TV is a powerful medium even when it isn't trying to be, even when it's only trying to entertain. There must be millions of people who have learned, simply by watching crime dramas in the past few years, that they have a right to remain silent when arrested.

*Herb Schlosser,
Former president of NBC*

What's to be learned from TV?

Children learn from television; but what they learn is unpredictable. They learn to recognize letters, numbers, words, buildings, policemen, and other symbols, as well as make distinctions among sirens, fog horns and airplane engines. They also learn to recognize danger through cause and effect relationships involving knives, deep water, precipices and speeding cars.

Moreover, a TV program about a child who is afraid of the dark may cause a young viewer to fear the dark, even though the message of the program is that there is nothing to fear. Similarly, children shown behavior that they should not engage in, such as abusing a younger sibling, may imitate that very behavior. This is why, for example, cartoon characters who remain indestructible — even after being smashed through walls, pounded into the ground and blown up — provide negative examples.

Children *can* acquire irrational ideas and anti-social habits from television. Therefore, it is ad-

visable for parents to view television with their children. This way the parent can encourage a running dialogue about what the child is seeing and experiencing.

However, in addition to fantasy in the form of cartoon characters, flying super people and happy endings, children also derive factual information from television. Everything happens on television: moon landings, wars, impeachment proceedings, funerals, presidential debates, murders, political conventions, executions, rapes, injustice, poverty and disaster, as well as interviews with famous people, live concerts from Lincoln Center and soccer games directly from Germany.

Television also teaches communication skills: vocabulary, common speech patterns, and a common language. Children learn that the rapid information transmission of our Electronic Age makes us a "global village" with a communality of interests.

They learn about differences and similarities in youngsters like themselves, living in distant places, with different governments, social structures, standards of living and geographic conditions.

Above all, children learn new ways of seeing. Camera tricks (animation, slow motion shots, pixilation) give visual delight while training and expanding vision. Children observe facial expressions and dramatic action, images and music in combination. Often they respond by clapping, rocking and dancing to the rhythm and beat of the music. In a variety of ways they learn to express feeling.

In short, children absorb content as well as form. They acquire ideas about career goals: they learn "TV behavior." As one fifth-grade teacher put it: "youngsters identify with television characters and want to be a part of their world."⁵

No need to compete with TV

Many teachers feel that they are competing with television for the attention of their students, and that they are losing. "Part of the problem is that I can't dance," says one South Dakota teacher.

Part of the problem is that I can't dance. . . . After thousands of hours in front of television, my students are addicted to entertainment. Try as I might, I cannot make correct spelling into a comedy routine. By the end of this year my students will be able to recite in detail the adventures of Starsky and Hutch, but will not be able to write a grammatically correct sentence.

Student writing, aside from specific assignments, is limited to obscene notes passed in class. Fighting — both verbal and physical — occurs frequently in the halls. Tardiness is a constant problem.

It's easy to blame the effect of television, but the causes for today's classroom problems go far deeper.

My students are unhappy with themselves and their lives. Most of them drink, some heavily, speaking of the need to make themselves feel good. I've received many compositions that cry of the writer's dissatisfaction and even self-hatred. Yet this is combined with a flaming antagonism toward parents, fellow students and teachers.

Despite such attitudes my students can be charming, lovable kids. They sparkle, giggle and exude warmth. If only they could remain so!

What shall we do? My colleagues and I want to educate our pupils by teaching the subjects we are trained to teach. But that's simply not enough. It's not enough in New York or in North Dakota. For my colleagues and me, as for Mr. Bloom and his, "it is all too much for us to handle." 6

Actually there is no need to compete with television. Teaching is not putting on a show; that's television's job. It is much simpler and more effective to use television as an aid to class discussion and teaching basic skills.

Resources:

Singer, Dorothy G. and Jerome L., and Diana M. Zuckerman. *Getting the Most Out of T.V.* (Santa Monica: Goodyear Publishing Co., 1981).

Postman, Neil. "Engaging Students in the Great Controversy," *Kappan*, January, 1983.



Making TV your ally

Even as we face a national epidemic of non-writing students, the very phenomenon which may be partially responsible for the problem might be the source of a cure. Television programs and television commercials are at least an area of shared experience. In fact, once a child is set to writing essays on the influence of TV, he may give up watching altogether.

Especially in the communication arts and social studies classes, television can be an invaluable ally. Students might learn how to write convincing advertising copy from watching the commercials. They might also learn to be more discerning consumers. (See a sample of student verse entitled "Electronic Shopping.")



Electronic Shopping

Yesterday on my TV,
They told me what to buy.
I hurried right out to the store
And the things I bought — oh my!

The doll that talked, it didn't walk,
And the cleaner didn't clean.
That's not what they said on TV;
You have to read between.

I bought a game that didn't come
With the needed batteries,
And the bicycle that looked so great,
Is in pieces 'round my knees.

That tasty cereal in the box
With the special offer in it;
That cereal tasted just like mud,
And the toy lasted a minute.

I bought some medicine for my cold
That they said wouldn't hurt my tummy;
It tasted just like turpentine,
And I still feel just as crummy.

And though I'm sure you've heard of laws
For truth in advertising,
You've got to be sure you understand,
That commercials need analyzing.

Suggested activities

Television can provide an experience base for developing basic skills:

Arithmetic

- Make a chart of today's TV shows, showing what time they're on. Use this chart for math drill. *e.g.*, How long before your favorite program?
- Take a poll of favorite and least favorite shows. Make a bar graph depicting the results.
- Take a poll of favorite activities and viewing habits. What percent of the class watched TV last night; what percent played games or did other things? Make a circle graph to show results.
- Many parents are unfamiliar with the metric system. Have children create a videotape for parents illustrating the concept and terms learned. Schedule a "Metric Night."

Speaking

- Retell the story of what happened on the show you watched last night paying attention to detail and sequence.

- When you watch the President's address tonight, observe his pronunciation, poise, voice control, eye contact. Use these factors when you give a speech in class.
- Students can be encouraged to act out or dramatize certain scenes from TV (with or without script).

Spelling

Listen for "new words" when you watch TV. List these.

- Keep a running display of vocabulary words associated with TV. Some of these words can be included in weekly spelling words.

Reading

- Collect reading materials related to TV: comics, magazines, activity books and books. Some books are made into TV programs; *e.g.*, *Little House on the Prairie* and *The Homecoming*, on which *The Waltons* is based. Many programs result in books; *e.g.*, *Star Trek*, *Six Million Dollar Man*, *The Brady Bunch*.
- Non-readers given stories connected with something seen on TV have an easier time reading. Because they know "what's going to happen," they don't have to worry about missing something or not understanding.

Thus they are free to focus on vocabulary and pronunciation, as well as to make comparisons between the text and the TV program.

- Students who have read a story, play or novel related to a TV program can discuss both in terms of casting, acting, setting, costumes, make-up, pace of the action, or simply state which they liked better and why.

Writing

- Write a simple plot summary of your favorite TV program, or a critical review for the school newspaper.
- Students can be encouraged to write fan letters to their favorite TV personalities. (To avoid disappointment, a list of production companies known to respond is important.) They can also write notes of praise or criticism to program sponsors.
- See poem "Electronic Shopping." Introduce to class and see how many ads children can recognize. Encourage them to write a similar poem.
- Word-minded youngsters can write weekly crossword puzzles for the school newspaper based on a favorite TV program or character.
- After several sessions of creative writing, students can choose their favorite story to dramatize as a TV program.

Reading and TV

There is an increasing number of attempts to coordinate the watching of TV programs with reading activities that can take place in the classroom. In two of the most successful of these programs, the Philadelphia TV Reading Program and the CBS Television Reading Program, scripts and teachers' guides can be obtained in advance of upcoming broadcasts.

Pilot TV-reading program

It all started when Dr. Michael McAndrew, reading specialist of the Philadelphia school system, decided to try a new approach to reading. He showed his class a retaped TV program on closed circuit TV, and asked the students to follow along in the script which he had distributed.

The students looked at the image on the screen, listened to the sounds, and looked down on the words on the page. Something clicked! Reading the words that the characters on the screen were uttering was almost like participating in the show. It even made watching television more enjoyable! Students who had never shown interest in reading perked up. Those with special difficulties began to make pronounced efforts. Nobody wanted to miss this exciting new experience.

A few years later, Dr. McAndrew and his colleagues Bernard Solomon and Deputy Superintendent Michael Marcuse of the Philadelphia

Board of Education had another idea: Why not develop the TV Reading Program by working with the networks and the newspapers? After all, when *The Vanishing Shadow* was used to teach reading in Jacksonville, Florida, it had outrated *Bonanza* and *The FBI* on rival stations.

On January 11 and 12, 1976, ABC broadcast the two-part dramatization of *Eleanor and Franklin*, based on Joseph Lash's book. The *Philadelphia Inquirer*, in cooperation with ABC and with financial support from IBM (the show's sponsor), published the entire script in a special supplement, distributed to seventh through twelfth grade students the week before. The students could read the script while watching the show, and discuss it with parents and teacher.

Resources:

For information about the *CBS Television Reading Program*, write to CBS Television Network, 51 West 52 Street, New York, New York 10019. The network also sponsors a program called *Read More about It* (The CBS/Library of Congress Book Project). Contact George Schweitzer, Director of Communications, CBS/Broadcast Group, (212) 975-8635.

Information about the availability of TV scripts may be obtained from: Capital Cities Communications, Inc., 4100 City Line Avenue, Philadelphia, Pa. 19131

The project was an overwhelming success. Not only were the ratings of the show higher in Philadelphia than anywhere else in the country, but more importantly, a lot of reading got done in Philadelphia that weekend and subsequently. To begin with, the *Inquirer's* circulation on the day the script was published jumped from a normal 410,000 to about 550,000. A few days later, McAndrew canvassed 30 Philadelphia bookstores, most of which had laid in large stocks of the 931-page Lash paperback. All but two were sold out. There was also an upsurge of interest in Lash's other books.⁷

"When they saw that the TV show depended on words put down on paper — words which they could read — reading became exciting for them," McAndrew recalls. "We want to reawaken their interest in reading; That's the most important thing. You have to reach out and touch the fabric of their world, and much of their world is TV."

The Philadelphia Program is presently being distributed commercially.

ABC Afterschool and Weekend Specials

ABC Afterschool and Weekend Specials

This series is based on books for children and young adults. A synopsis of the program, bio-

graphical data on the author of the original book, and a list of other books by the same author are provided in advance of broadcast.

The CBS Television Reading Program

The CBS program is much like the Philadelphia Program, though it has included scripts of news programs as well as dramas. One important difference is that it is presently being offered free (see Resources). The students can read the scripts in the classroom and refer to them while watching the programs at home with their families. The teacher's guide suggests ways to initiate classroom discussions and involve the students in a variety of additional reading, writing, and creative projects stemming from their intensive work with the script.

The CBS Library

This is a regular program on CBS which attempts to encourage reading by dramatizing themes from children's books. *CBS Library*, an hour-long show that introduces a number of books with 10-minute appetite-whetting scenes for each book. Books are introduced under a central theme. One planned is "Misunderstood Monsters," and another in development is "Orphans, Waifs and Wards" — to introduce the likes of *Oliver Twist*.

From books to television

Literature — both new and classic — is always a treasure-trove of ideas for TV programming. One has only to scan the latest issue of any television guide to see stories of forthcoming dramatic events based on books. The fact is that these successful television productions often send viewers — young and old alike — back to the original book. Indeed, librarians report that as a result of television, students request and read more frequently such time-honored classics as

Treasure Island and *Black Beauty*, or *The Little House on the Prairie*, *The Hardy Boys* and the "Nancy Drew" books. The phenomenal success of *Roots* a few years ago has been matched by *Shogun*, *Masada*, and *Brideshead Revisited*.

Some other outstanding made-for-TV dramatizations of books in the past few years are as follows:

Friendly Fire, C.D. Bryan (ABC)
The Scarlett Letter, Nathaniel Hawthorne (PBS)
Brave New World, Aldous Huxley (NBC)
Centennial, James Michener (NBC)
Studs Lonigan, James T. Farrell (NBC)
All Quiet on the Western Front, Erich Maria Remarque
A Man Called Intrepid, William Stevenson (Lorimar Prod.)
Therese Raquin, Emile Zola (PBS)
Pride and Prejudice, Jane Austin (PBS)
A Tale of Two Cities, Charles Dickens
The Kent Family Chronicles John Jakes (PIX)
Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy, John Le Carré
Charterhouse of Parma, Stendhal
Winds of War, Herman Wouk
The Thornbirds, Colleen McCullough



Using TV as a resource

Young people who do not understand how a TV program is put together, how images are made, and how they are transmitted, are passive viewers. It is time to take the magic out of the experience of watching television by helping children become alert and responsive to what they are seeing.

The question is no longer how much television children watch, or even what they watch, but *what they do with it*. Clearly, disparate bits and pieces of information do not help children lead productive lives. "I'm not sure how such 'knowledge' is used, or what it does," observes author Jerzy Kosinski:

Does it make life more meaningful or individuals more active? Does it encourage adventure? Does it arm an individual against the pains inflicted by society, by other humans, by aging? Does it bring us closer to each other? Does it explain us to ourselves and ourselves to each other? Does it?⁸

Children need to learn to watch television critically and selectively, so that they can choose behavior patterns that are transferable to problem solving tasks in life's different areas.

Practically any program can yield valuable learning experiences. Cops and robbers shows are useful for identifying antisocial behavior and discussing constitutional violations. Situation come-

dies offer opportunities to reflect on social attitudes and conventions. Family dramas can be springboards for values clarification.

At the same time, "educational" programs, like the *Ten Who Dared* series about famous explorers, Jacques Cousteau's *Diving for Roman Plunder*, *Robin Hood* or *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, are veritable gold mines. Their vivid portrayals of distant places and eras can give the school text a fresh dimension, a new liveness. Other programs, like the *Afternoon Specials* (ABC), *Special Treat* (NBC) and *Visions* (PBS), can provide substantial material for discussing real life problems.



As they decode TV images, youngsters achieve visual literacy. Teachers of English composition can teach writing techniques by referring to the "grammar" of television – the camera's techniques of *switching*, *zooming in*, *panning*. In fact, TV production is a unique opportunity for children to try their talent with a new medium. One teacher who carried out such a media project with 16 children (9 of whom were considered failures in school) between the ages of 5 and 9 reports:

As we suspected, the camera turned out to be an excellent tool. It served not as an end in itself, but rather as means to help "open" the children and give them a non-verbal, non-threatening relation to their world; a means to look again, observe, question, differentiate, clarify, and in the broadest sense, become effective learners.⁹

Since actions and images speak louder than words, television is potentially the most effective educational medium ever devised – provided it is used judiciously. This is why teachers across the country are experimenting with the manifold applications of television to classroom learning. Even parents are using television to communicate more intimately with their children.

"... Before we sign off"

Resources:

Periodicals for teachers and parents:

Agency for Instructional Television Newsletter. Agency for Instructional Television, Box A, Bloomington, Ind. 47401. (Free),

American Educator. American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO, 11 Dupont Circle N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. (Quarterly. \$5.00/year.)

Learning. 530 University Avenue, Palo Alto, Cal. 94301 (Monthly. \$10.00/year)

Media and Methods. North American Publishing Co., 134 North 13th Street, Philadelphia, Pa. 19107 (Monthly. \$9.00/year)

Prime Time School Television. 120 LaSalle Street, Suite 810, Chicago, Ill. 60603 (PTST publishes monthly bulletins supplying information for teachers about prime time television programs and their uses as educational resources.)

Principal. National Assoc. of Elementary School Principals, 1801 North Moore Street, Arlington, Va. 22209

Teacher. Macmillan Professional Magazines, One Fawcett Place, Greenwich, Conn. 06830 (Monthly \$12.00/year)

Teachers' Guides to Television. Television Information Office, 699 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10021 (TGT also puts out a parent participation TV workshop handbook.)

TVision Newsletter. Journalism Education Association: TV Commission, James Matthews, 1101 Arlington Avenue, LaGrange, Ill. 60525 (Subscriptions/\$4.50)

Manuals:

TV: The Family School by Edward Morris and Freida Gregory. Avatar Press; Atlanta, Ga., 1976.

WNET/Thirteen, *Critical Television: A Language Skills Work-A-Text.* (New York: Cambridge, 1980).

Me and My TV. Journalism Education Association, 147 Tomahawk Trail, Ill. 60550.

Teaching Strategy One: *Pre-Planning*

You will be able to implement the *TV and Growing Up* curriculum in direct relation to the amount of pre-planning you do. There are three vital areas of pre-planning.

- 1) Survey to find out what TV programs your students watch
- 2) Survey to find out what your students read – books, pulps, newspapers, comic books
- 3) Survey parents to get a picture of their interest and willingness to cooperate in an effort to make a positive use of TV

Depending on the grade level of your students, the survey might range from an informal show of hands to a detailed written questionnaire. You might also want to find out what other activities your students pursue – what hobbies, what games. A chart of how many hours are spent pursuing each activity might be compared with the Nielsen Chart shown on this page.

Involving the parents might require some politicking outside your classroom. With the cooperation of your principal and the Parents Association President, you might arrange to use the first PTA meeting of the school year to highlight the urgency of being concerned about the child's TV viewing.

Grades K-2 (My favorite program)

Objectives:

- to identify favorite TV programs
- to apply time concepts to TV viewing

Materials:

- paper clock with movable hands
- crayons
- paper
- *TV Guide* or any TV schedule from the newspaper

Procedure:

1. Ask the children to name favorite TV programs.
2. Discuss what day of the week a given program is on. List the days of the week.
3. Discuss the time a given program is on. The children can show time by moving the hands of a paper clock.
4. Check time and day of each program in *TV Guide* with the children.
5. Ask the children to make their own time chart, stating their favorite program and the day and time they watch it!

Table 1: Average hours of TV viewing by children per week¹⁰

		Age Group				Age Group	
		2-5	6-11			2-5	6-11
Mon. - Fri.	7:00 A.M. - 10:00 A.M.	2.85	1.25	Sun.	7:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.	1.41	.88
	10:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.	2.21	.60		1:00 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.	.34	.58
	1:00 P.M. - 4:30 P.M.	2.84	1.72		4:30 P.M. - 7:30 P.M.	.74	.92
	4:30 P.M. - 7:30 P.M.	5.36	5.07		4:30 P.M. - 7:00 P.M.	.52	.67
Sat.	7:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.	2.53	2.23	Mon. - Sun.	7:30 P.M. - 8:00 P.M.	1.41	1.56
	1:00 P.M. - 4:30 P.M.	.48	.72		8:00 P.M. - 11:00 P.M.	5.44	8.13
	4:30 P.M. - 7:30 P.M.	.69	.73		11:00 P.M. - 11:30 P.M.	.14	.33
					11:30 P.M. - 1:00 A.M.	.14	.42
					1:00 A.M. - 7:00 A.M.	.21	.34
				Mon. - Sun. 24-Hour Total		26.79	25.48

Grades 3-9 (Keeping a diary)

Ask students to keep a week-long diary, listing all TV programs watched.

Table 2: My weekly TV-watching log

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
7-8 a.m.							
8-9 a.m.							
9-10 a.m.							
10-11 a.m.							
11-12 a.m.							
12-1 p.m.							
1-2 p.m.							
2-3 p.m.							
3-4 p.m.							
4-5 p.m.							
5-6 p.m.							
6-7 p.m.							
7-8 p.m.							

Teaching Strategy Two: *Recognizing Symbols on TV*

Grades K-2 ("K" for Kellogg)

Objectives:

- to recognize symbols
- to connect the symbol with the thing it "stands for"

Materials:

- flashcards depicting symbols
- cassette tape recorder
- tapes of TV tunes and jingles
- drawing paper and crayons

Procedure:

1. Show some currently familiar TV symbols.
2. Ask the children to name the TV show or commercial that goes with each picture. Write the name on the board.
3. Discuss the relationship between the picture symbol and the name of the show or commercial.
4. Sounds can also be symbols. Hum or play back a TV tune or jingle. Ask the students to guess what it goes with. Write it on the board.
5. Call out the names of the TV programs or commercials already mentioned. Ask the chil-

dren to respond to each one with a jingle, a tune, words, drawings, or mimicry.

Summary:

Now ask the children what they think of when they think of your own classroom. (The teacher, a view from the window, a desk, a "best friend," the building, clothes, etc.) As a class project, make a collage of symbols representing "school."

Grades 3-4 (What is my symbol?)

Objectives:

- to recognize symbols
- to understand that there are conventional symbols and private symbols

Materials:

- flashcards showing TV symbols
- crayons, drawing paper, and colored paper
- scissors
- bulletin board and thumb tacks

Procedure:

1. Show some familiar TV symbols (e.g., Big Bird, Superman's insignia, the Mary Tyler Moore

cat, the NBC peacock, the CBS "eye"). Ask the children what each one "stands for."

2. Discuss the relationship between symbols and the things they represent.

3. Ask the students to recall the symbol of their favorite program and draw it. They can also make up their own symbols. The class will guess what each student-made symbol stands for.

4. Discuss the difference between conventional symbols (which are recognizable to most people) and private symbols. For example, what do you think of when you think of things connected with yourself? (e.g., your house, your favorite toy, your mother, etc.)

5. Ask the students to make up their own symbol for themselves. It can be a picture of an object, a name, or a word description.

Assignment:

Look for interesting symbols when you watch TV. Using cutouts and drawings, make a scrapbook of your favorite TV symbols.

Grades 5-6 (Where am I?)

Objective:

- to recognize symbols of time and place

Materials:

- Crayons and magic markers
- cardboard sheets
- modeling clay

Procedure:

1. Ask the students to name TV programs that deal with New York, e.g., *Kojak*, *Barney Miller*, *All in the Family*, or *The Jeffersons*.
2. Discuss how the students know that they deal with New York. What are the indicators of time and place?
3. When you think of New York, what things come to mind? (The skyline, the Statue of Liberty, a street sign of Madison Avenue.) Ask each student to make a poster about New York using these symbols.
4. Not all TV programs deal with New York. For example, *Hawaii Five-O* has scenes of Honolulu; *Charlie's Angels* and *Lou Grant* take place in California. Ask the students to make a list of all the places that they have gotten to know through watching TV and to find these places on the map. (Students can be encouraged to draw maps or designs symbolizing different

cities. They can even make "souvenirs" out of clay.)

5. TV programs also use symbols to localize the action in *time*. For example, if it's dark, it's nighttime. If the trees have no leaves, it's winter. If hair and clothes styles are not modern, it's another era. Ask the students to keep a log in which they list the different hints or symbols of time contained in TV programs.

6. Ask the students to write a short description of a favorite place, using symbols of place and time.

Assignment:

Next time you watch your favorite TV show, make a note of the symbols of time and place. How would the show have been different without them? Would it have been better or worse? Explain.



Grades 7-9 (Symbols of the 80s)

For language arts and for social studies

Objectives:

- to recognize symbols
- to learn about other cultures and eras through their symbols

Materials:

- writing materials
- pictures and posters
- drawing and painting materials

Procedure:

1. Ask the students to name some TV programs about other cultures and/or eras, e.g., *Happy Days*, *The Chisbols*, *The Little House on the Prairie*, *M.A.S.H.*
2. Discuss the symbols or indicators used by these programs to represent particular cultures and/or eras. The fifties, for example, are represented by boys in leather jackets and oily hairstyles; science fiction programs about the future usually dress their characters in sleek functional clothing and they are surrounded by sophisticated computers; the pioneer days of our country are symbolized by leather vests and cowboy hats on the men and long, homespun dresses on the women; horses and wagons for farm use are another "pioneer days indicator." Your class may want to discuss some special mini-series

about conspicuously different times and places – the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the Second World War, life in the Near East or Far East.

3. Divide the class into groups, each group in charge of collecting symbols for one culture or era. This can lead to reading and research assignments or arts projects.

Alternatives:

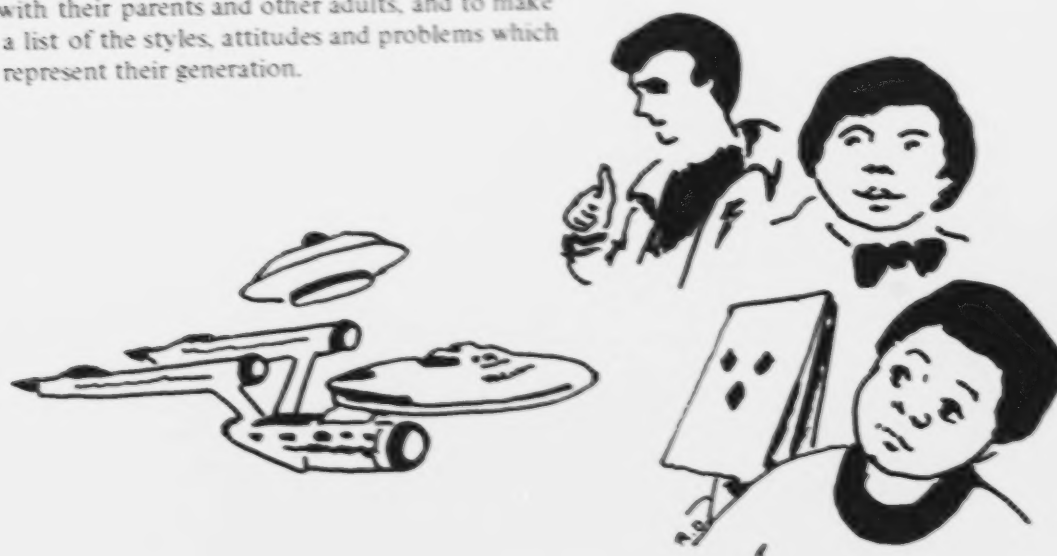
1. What are some symbols of this generation? How are they different from those of your parents' generation? Ask the students to consult with their parents and other adults, and to make a list of the styles, attitudes and problems which represent their generation.

2. What TV images do you think you will best remember 10 or 20 years from now? Which would you like to remember? Ask the students to write a poem or make a collage based on TV images.

3. Another possibility: as a class project, create a mural depicting the TV images of our generation (The Pillsbury "Doughboy," the Fonz' leather jacket, Frank Perdue's face, the starship *Enterprise*, Kojak's lollipop, Mr. Roarke's white suit, etc.)

4. Ask the students to do a fifties project using *Happy Days* as a starting point.

- Discuss Fonzie as a symbol of the fifties and as a character in his own right.
- Discuss how different TV shows, plays, movies (such as *Happy Days*, *Laverne and Shirley*, *Grease*, *Rebel Without a Cause*, etc.) depict teenagers and young people of the 1950s. Compare Fonzie to other leading characters.
- Research the 1950s for significant events (Korean War, Army-McCarthy hearings, Sputnik). Parents are a good point of research. Were the fifties really as they are depicted in *Happy Days* or *Grease*, etc.? (Point out that *M.A.S.H.* is another view of life in the fifties.)



Derenberg/KIDS

Teaching Strategy Three: *An Interdisciplinary Approach to TV Viewing*

... using a PBS program (A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court) as a model

Resources:

The Coloring Book of the Middle Ages. San Francisco: Bellerophon Books (available at the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Children's bookstore).

George L. Coulton. *Life in the Middle Ages*. New York: Cambridge University Press (n.d.).

Robert Delort. *Life in the Middle Ages*. New York: Universe, 1973.

Edmund V. Gillon, Jr. *Middle Ages: Dover Coloring Book*. New York: Dover, 1968.

Barbara L. Picard. *Stories of King Arthur and his Knights*. New York: Henry Z. Walck, Inc., 1955.

Howard Pyle. *The Story of King Arthur and his Knights*. New York: Dover, 1965 (illustrated).

———. *The Story of the Champions of the Round Table*. New York: Dover, 1968 (illustrated).

Grades K-2 (Paper crowns)

Objectives:

- to focus on images from a TV show

Materials:

- paper crown and/or helmet
- paper
- crayons

Procedure:

1. Put on a crown or a helmet and wait for the children to react.
2. Discuss: Is it *strange, funny, weird, different*?
3. One of the characters in *The Connecticut Yankee* was wearing such a crown or helmet. What other strange things did you see? (*Vocabulary: crown, helmet, castle, shield, sword, knight, lady*).
4. Ask the children to draw something they saw.
5. Help the children put captions under their drawings.

Grades 3-4 (What's so funny?)

Objectives:

- to learn about the Middle Ages
- to understand what makes things look funny

Materials:

- Books about the Middle Ages (see Resources in the first column)
- dictionary
- paper, crayons, and scissors
- old magazines

Procedure:

1. Discuss the students' impressions of the TV program: clothes the people wore, their homes, their weapons.
2. Teach new vocabulary (*e.g., helmet, visor, chain mail, catapult*), using illustrations from the books on the Middle Ages. Encourage the students to seek more information from these books.
3. Discuss: If you suddenly saw a knight galloping down your street on a plumed horse, what would you think? Would it be as funny as the brigade of knights riding bicycles to rescue King Arthur? Explain.

Grades 3-4 (cont'd)

4. Ask the students to discuss other "funny" things in the TV program, as well as in their own experience.

5. Divide the class into small groups. Each group will work on a collage, making their own pictures of medieval items and cutting out pictures from magazines. The object is to create funny pictures. (e.g., heads with bodies that don't fit, etc.) with captions under them.

Summary:

Name three ways in which the people of the Middle Ages lived differently from the way we do.



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Grades 5-6 (Solar eclipses)

Objectives:

- to learn about solar eclipses
- to understand that we tend to be afraid of what we don't understand

Materials:

- crayons
- paper
- science book

Procedure:

1. Remember the scene in the *Connecticut Yankee* where Hank Morgan is about to be burned at the stake? How is the outcome of this scene important to the development of the story?

2. Why were the people around Hank so terrified when the sun began to disappear? Ask the students if they would have been afraid? Explain.



3. What is a solar eclipse? Ask the students to look this up in a science book and to draw a picture of a solar eclipse.

4. Ask the students to find out: the length of time that a solar eclipse can last; the date of the last solar eclipse in the area; the date when the next one is predicted to occur.

5. Now would you be afraid if the sun suddenly went black? Why not? Ask the students to write a short composition relating a time when they experienced fear because they didn't understand what was going on. Alternatively, the students can write about a time when they were *not* afraid because they were able to understand the situation.

Assignment:

Ask the students to list things that people are often afraid of (i.e., drowning, lightning and thunder, stray dogs, heights, rats, etc.). Each student will choose one item and analyze the reasons for that fear. What can people do to overcome their fears?



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Grades 7-9 (Culture week)

Language arts and social studies

Objective:

- to understand the meaning of "culture shock"

Materials:

- tape recorder
- paper
- pencils, crayons, and paints

Procedure:

1. If you had a time machine and you could be anywhere in time, where and when would you choose to be? Explain. (The idea of traveling in time has fascinated many writers. Mark Twain's character, Hank Morgan, finds himself back thirteen centuries in time and becomes a Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court. Woody Allen's movie *Sleeper* tells the story of a character who is frozen and put into a container. Three centuries later he is defrosted, only to face a bewildering new world. Kurt Vonnegut's character, Billy, in *Slaughterhouse 5* is a man who becomes "unstuck" in time. He moves back and forth through the present, past and future. Washington Irving's Rip Van Winkle goes to sleep one afternoon and wakes up twenty years later. It was H.G. Wells who first came up with the idea of a "time machine" in the book by that name.)

2. When Hank Morgan wakes up, Clarence tells him that he's in medieval England. Hank experiences "culture shock." After the initial surprise, he makes adjustments to his new environment. Ask the students to discuss some of these adjustments.

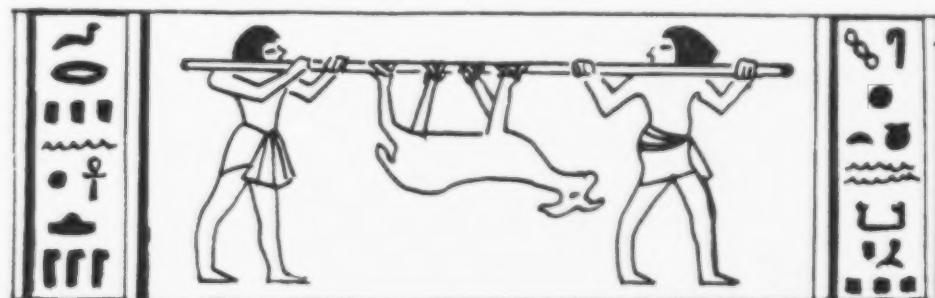
3. Ask the students to discuss their own "culture shock" experiences (e.g., jet lag, moving to a new neighborhood, a new country, etc.), together with adjustments they had to make.

4. Hank Morgan wasn't the only one who experienced culture shock. The people around him were bewildered by the strange new things that he taught them. Discuss the things that were "out of place" in King Arthur's Court (e.g., bicycles, telegraph, newspaper, electricity).

5. Ask the students to imagine a medieval character from *A Connecticut Yankee* appearing before them, the way Hank appeared before King Arthur's court. He or she has never seen or heard of the United States, let alone television, newspapers, stereo, electric lights, cars, airplanes, telephone, or any of the modern things that we take for granted. Then ask them to pair up and jointly write a dialogue in which one person explains an item of modern life to the other person who is completely "out of it." (The dialogue can be acted out and taped.)

Assignment:

The students can write their own "time machine" story. They can wake up to find themselves in ancient Egypt, colonial America, or in the 21st century.



Denenberg/OCDS

Footnotes: Chapter 1

¹ A. Bandura, "The Role of Modeling Processes in Personality Development." *The Young Child: Reviews of Research*. Washington, D.C. National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1967, as quoted in Gerald Lesser, *Children and Television* (New York: Random House, 1974) p. 23.

² Gerald Lesser, *Children and Television*. (New York: Random House, 1974), p. 234.

³ Frank Mankiewicz and Joel Swerdlow, *Remote Control* (New York: Quadrangle, 1977), p. 186.

⁴ *Ibid.* pp. 169-170.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 192.

⁶ Elizabeth Raum, "In North Dakota, Too," *New York Times*. May 11, 1977, p. 23, col. 2.

⁷ Max Gunther, "How Television Helps Johnny Read," *TV Guide*. September 4, 1976.

⁸ Joseph F. Littell, ed., *Coping with the Mass Media*. (Evanston, Ill.: McDougal Littell, 1976), p. 23.

⁹ Roberta Harris, "A Child's-Eye-View," *Children are Centers for Understanding Media*. (Washington, D.C.: Association for Childhood Education International, 1973).

¹⁰ A.C. Nielsen Co., *Nielsen Television Index*, reprinted in *The New York Times*, April 20, 1980, section 12, p. 17.

2. *The Choices Children Make*

... television has become a powerful intruder in the traditional processes by which parents and teachers impart values to children. It is a dangerous intruder because it portrays excessive violence, gives children a silly picture of adult life, encourages a deadly passivity, and creates a fantasy world in which entertainment is the highest value and every problem is easily resolved.

A communication system is totally neutral. It has no conscience, no morality. It has only a history. It will broadcast filth or inspiration with equal facility. It will speak the truth as loudly as it will speak falsehood. It is, in sum, no more or no less than the men and women who use it.

Edward R. Murrow



Choosing to watch TV

There is much that is wrong with television. But since television isn't going to go away, and since children watch a lot of it, why not deal with what we have? As a starter, parents can use television as a point of contact to communicate with their children. As Barbara Grizzati points out:

Even the worst television programs—sometimes, oddly enough, *especially* the worst television programs—create the opportunity for children to develop moral and aesthetic judgments or choices. In a restless world where children are faced with a bewildering perplexity of choices, I'd just as soon they explored and defined and articulated their feelings in our living room before they test them out—or are themselves tested in the world. And I want to be there with them while they are doing it.¹

Parents are often aghast at what their children learn from television: adultery, homosexuality and rape. Continuously, and in large doses, television brings up all kinds of touchy subjects: racism, hostility, poverty, corruption. It also stirs up rarely discussed personal feelings, prejudices and animosities. Why not use television with its wide range of characters and dramatic plots, to discuss things that “really matter”?

How much TV do children watch?

By the time the average American child enters school, he or she has already spent more hours learning about this world from television than he or she will spend in college. By high school graduation, he or she has watched anywhere from 15,000 to 20,000 hours of programming as opposed to only 11,000 hours in the classroom.²

There are variations in the viewing pattern. Children of very educated parents watch less television than other children. IQ is also a significant determinant. In the early grade school, brighter children tend to watch more television, just as they do more of everything else—read, play, explore. Then, between the ages of 10 and 13, a major shift in viewing habits occurs: The brighter child begins to watch less television and devotes more time to other activities.³

Why do children watch TV?

Children watch television for the same reasons most adults do: diversion, amusement and pleasure. They also watch in order to be “with it.” Since no child wants to appear “freaky,” peer group pressure acts to reinforce children's viewing habits.



Roy Doty/Macmillan

What do children watch?

Surveys of what it is children watch are important to marketing and advertising. But they are even more important to parents and teachers who are concerned about the effects. The names of the programs change annually; but the general nature of the child's viewing fare remains the same—fantasy, comedy, adventure and some family drama. The table below is excerpted from the 1983 Nielsen Report on Television.

Table 3: Top fifteen television programs (Oct. - Nov. 1982)

CHILDREN 2-11

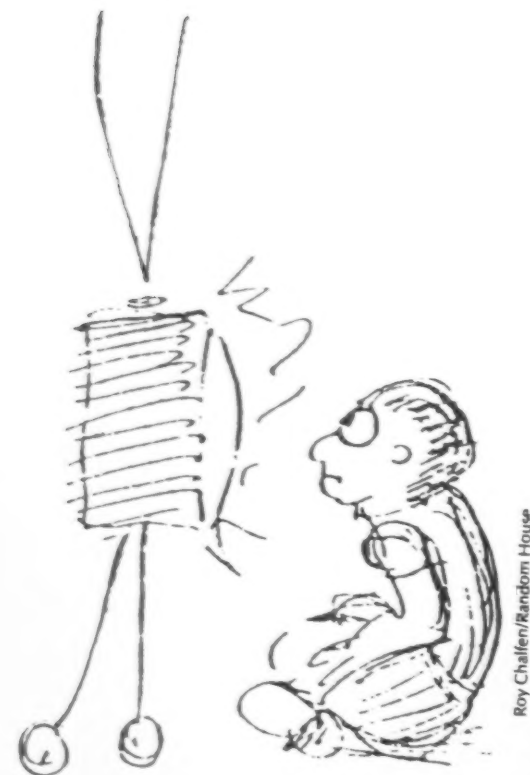
Program Name	Average Audience %
Pac-Man/Rascals/Richie - 3	26.3
Pac-Man/Rascals/Richie - 2	25.3
Smurfs III	22.8
Happy Days	21.8
Dukes Of Hazzard	21.4
Walt Disney	19.9
Laverne And Shirley	19.8
Gary Coleman Show	19.2
Smurfs II	18.6
Pac-Man/Rascals/Richie - 1	18.1
Knight Rider	17.2
Mork/Laverne/Fonz Hour - 2	16.9
CHiPs	16.8
Smurfs I	16.8
Diff'rent Strokes	16.0

TEENS 12-17

Program Name	Average Audience %
Laverne And Shirley	29.5
Happy Days	25.8
Three's Company	23.9
NBC Sunday Night Movie	19.3
CHiPs	19.2
Knight Rider	17.6
Square Pegs	17.4
Joanie Loves Chachi	17.2
9 To 5	17.2
M*A*S*H	16.9
Too Close For Comfort	16.7
Facts Of Life	16.6
Fall Guy	16.3
Private Benjamin	15.9
Fame	15.4

For discussion:

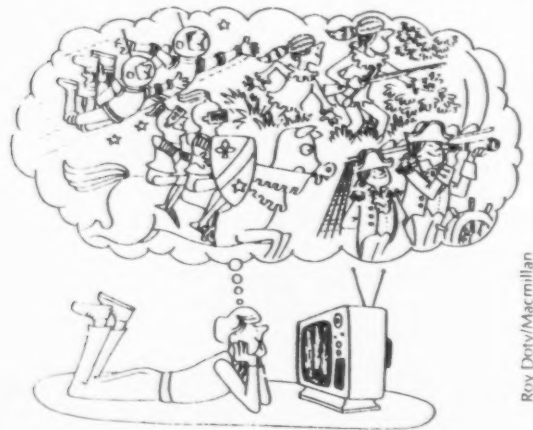
- What is the willing suspension of disbelief? Give examples.
- Why do we worship heroes? Are the heroes we worship an extension of our fantasies of ourselves?
- How is the character "Fonzie" different from the actor Henry Winkler?



Roy Challen/Random House

TV fantasy

Television did not invent illusion, but it transmits it with greater frequency than any other medium. As a result, television satisfies the fantasy needs of many people. Suffice it to say that on the day of the first moon landing, the networks received hundreds of complaints from viewers because their favorite programs were not being broadcast. One program that drew especially high reaction was ABC's *Lost in Space*.⁴



Because TV fantasy comes in large doses, youngsters have a tendency to confuse it with reality. As the famous linguist and legislator Samuel Hayakawa has pointed out, "The imaginative representations of life, as depicted by commercial television, are a form of literature, shaping people's daydreams and life styles, just as surely as *The Song of Roland* or *Huckleberry Finn*."

To the extent that television does not reflect reality, it socializes children into a fictitious social system, where criminals are always caught, minorities and the elderly are rarely seen, guilty people always break down under a good lawyer's barrage of questions, problems are solved in an hour, and things usually work out for the best.⁵

There is much more to a real football game, for example, than what is shown on *Superbowl*. On the TV screen we see only those aspects of the performance that the director has selected. We never see the sweat, the injuries, or the long hours the players had to work to be ready for this game.

Likewise, when television depicts Congressional hearings, the truly substantive part of government in action is left out. Senator S.I. Hayakawa's remarks ring true:

Militant young people—far from being "disillusioned" with democratic processes—are totally unacquainted with them since they are rarely shown on television. The arduous day-to-day debates, fact finding and arguments by which social decisions are arrived at by every democratic body, from town council to the Congress of the U.S., are never shown.⁶



"Don't you understand? This is life, this is what is happening. We can't switch to another channel."

Suggested activities

Grades 5-6 (Fantasy)

The teacher videotapes two scenes from a TV favorite, *e.g.*, a predicament of Steve Austin from *Six Million Dollar Man*. He/she writes two paragraphs describing these scenes. The first paragraph is written "straight," on a laminated copy. The second paragraph is written as a list of mixed-up sentences. After the students see the videotape, they then put the mixed-up sentences in proper sequence to get the hero out of his predicament.

Students can examine and classify Saturday morning TV programs as *real* or *unreal* by asking: "Could this happen in real life?" A field trip to a local TV station to view professional production will help take some of the real out of the unreal.

Students can make a scrapbook of "unreal" things from TV (dancing Crest tubes, Big Bird, Bionic people, etc.). Some motivating questions would be:

- Did you ever try to imitate something you saw someone do on TV? Was it easy? Explain.

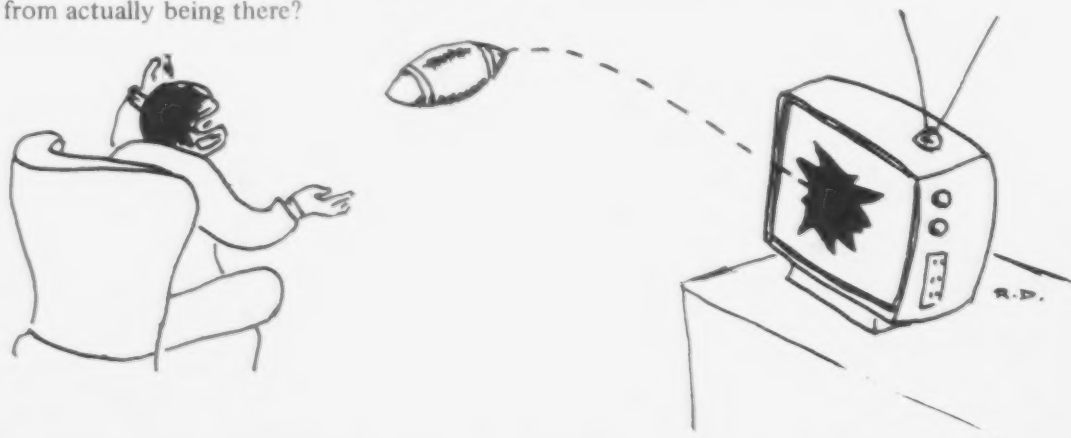
- Compare your own experiences – playing basketball, singing, giving a speech, dancing, etc.) with those of TV characters or personalities.
- Do you think TV gives you a *total* picture of life? When you watch a baseball game, for example, do you ever see the players receiving instructions on what type of hit to make? What else *don't* you see on TV?

Grades 5-6 (Sports)

Discuss some of the following ideas with the class, preferably the Monday after a big sports spectacular.

- How is watching a TV sports event different from actually being there?

- What does TV not show us about a sports event?
- How does the TV camera control what we see?
- In what ways can the TV announcer influence how we feel about a game or about individual players?
- Can you think of an instance in which TV's time priorities cut short the broadcast of a game or event whose outcome was in doubt? (One example was the Oakland Raiders – N.Y. Jets football playoff game, otherwise known as the "Heidi" game.)



Denenberg/OCDS

TV's warped views of crime and sex

In the area of crime, television distorts to the point of falsifying. TV crime is almost *entirely a white, middle class phenomenon*, dealing with complex plots involving inheritance, business control or the theft of jewelry or securities.⁷ Rarely does television deal with *real* crime in America — muggings, rape, abuse of family members, burglary, or unglamorous white collar crime such as embezzlement and graft.

More and more, television is dealing with sex. A decade ago mere mention of homosexuality, impotence, venereal disease was taboo on television. Today such issues are current. So is sex talk. But there is still not enough focus on responsibility. "There are nearly one million pregnancies a year among teenagers in this country," says the Rev. William Fore of the National Council of Churches. "The problem of sex on TV is that it doesn't deal with the consequences."⁸

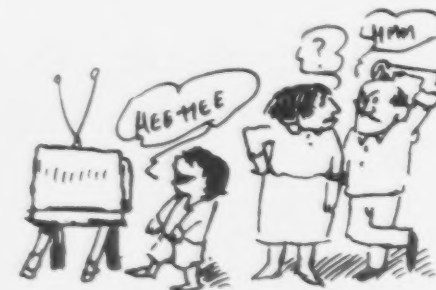
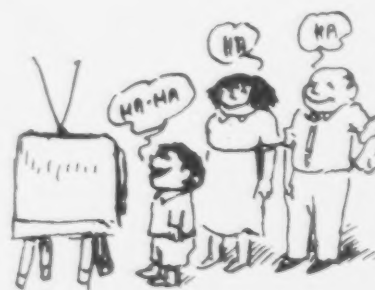
Grades 7-9 (Crime and sex)

The following are some launching pads for a discussion of crime and sex on television.

- Compare crime reports in the newspapers with crime on TV programs. Is there a difference? Explain.
- In what ways do TV programs influence your thinking about: Romantic love? Having a good relationship with a member of the

opposite sex? Teenage conflicts? Homosexuality? Manipulation or sexual control? Rape? Adultery? The consequences of sexual activity?

- Are there some TV situations which can be compared with your personal life? Explain.
- If you had to rewrite a TV script, how would you change it to deal with the consequences of sexual activity?



Parent Participation

TV stereotypes

Sexual role models on television is another area of concern. Unattached, adventurous male figures, like Stone, Buck Rogers, Steve Austin, Trapper John, Gonzo Gates and Captain Kirk are continuously glorified. TV "machos" even come in older versions, such as Kojak, Barnaby Jones, Quincy and Ironside. On the other hand, female swingers, like Charlie's Angels, usually act as male bait, while commercials still depict women as housewives whose sole concern is "ring around the collar."⁹ As Elizabeth Roberts, Director of the Project on Human Sexual Development, observes:

You don't usually see men express affection for each other on TV. You don't usually see women solve their problems or even be close friends... When television viewers see unmarried women primarily as victims, married men primarily as fools, and children with "asexual parents," they are receiving clear messages about "appropriate sexual conduct."¹⁰

With respect to occupational, racial and ethnic stereotypes, television is also transmitting messages that must be questioned. Only 6 out of 10 TV characters seem to have jobs. Among those characters with occupations, almost one third are related to law enforcement. Blue collar characters, in their rare appearances, are usually presented in a negative light.¹¹

At the same time, occupations are highly stereo-

typed: Lawyers are very clever... Members of artistic professions are almost always temperamental and eccentric. Police officials are generally hardened. Private investigators are always resourceful and clearly more capable than the police. Nurses are cold and impersonal. Salesmen are glib. Journalists are callous. Taxi, bus and truck drivers are burly and aggressive.¹²

Moreover, if one takes a look at black programming, says Dr. Carolyn Block, director of children's services at the Westside Community Mental Health Center, in San Francisco:

It is easy to conclude that all black people are funny and/or stupid. They sing, dance, talk tough, play sports, and dress well. Black television characterizations, particularly in television series, rarely depict true dominance and leadership, affection, or success in prestigious occupations. In short, black characters are rarely seen as competent, well-functioning human beings who are capable of controlling and affecting their own lives in serious ways.¹³

A study carried out by *Black Efforts for Soul in Television* (BEST) found that on Saturday morning children's programs non-American and non-white cultures were referred to negatively almost every time they were mentioned. In addition, black and other minority characters made up only a small percentage of the characters: seven percent in the case of blacks, two percent for other minorities.¹⁴

More recent results from a study by the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications conclude that television has had a strong effect on attitudes toward sexism and minorities.

After a ten year study of 1,335 network programs with 16,000 characters, the study found that men outnumbered women three to one. White male characters represented 68 percent in 1962 and 62 percent in 1978, indicating only a 6 percent drop in this unfair role. Moreover, women characters tend to be demeaned as comical, immature and dependent. Children, minorities and the aged were underrepresented, and were seen by viewers as members of low-class cultural ghettos.

Not only are minorities underrepresented, but they are also misrepresented proportionately. Orientals were overrepresented, while hispanics were underrepresented.

Considering the movements for women's equality and fairer treatment for minorities since 1962, the changes have been hardly noticeable to the viewing public.

Lead the students in a discussion of the following questions:

- What is a *stereotype*? Check the dictionary for an analysis of the word.
- Is “Fonzie” a stereotype? Is “Richie Cunningham”? Discuss.
- If you could be anyone you wanted to be from TV, who would you be? (Jamie

Sommers? Kojak? Trapper John? Tenspeed Turner? Kelly on *Charlie’s Angels*? One of the Dukes of Hazzard? Mork? Buck Rogers? Arnold on *Different Strokes*?

Have students write a short essay explaining why they picked the character that they did. What special qualities does he or she have — courage, beauty, cleverness, charm, honesty? What kinds of things does he or she do? Does this character

lead an exciting life? How so? Is this character free and powerful, popular and loved, successful and adventurous? What makes this character “special” to you?

When you watch TV, focus on the main character. Describe his role or occupation, as well as personal traits, such as race, ethnic background, and manner. Is he or she clever, jolly, rough, neat, etc? Keep track of your results on a Table such as the one below.

Table 4: Focus on some main characters

Title of program or commercial:	Time of day:	Role or occupation:	Description of personal traits:

Consumption and TV

In one year the average youngster sees over 20,000 commercials laden with messages of what to eat, drink and buy, as well as what to look like and even what to think. (An important element of commercials is fantasy.) By depicting "beautiful people," flashy cars, and all the comforts of modern living, advertisers play on the viewer's dreams of instant gratification. Dristan tablets, we are told, give "quick relief." Prell Shampoo makes us look and feel sexy. If we drink Pepsi, we will be "with it." In short, buying equals happiness.

Just how do commercials give the illusion that the product advertised is the "best"? There are a number of clever persuasion techniques:

- Catchy jingles ("Things go better with Coke...")
- Comparisons (Clorox with brand X)
- Endorsements (Joe De Maggio's, Pat Boone's, and Lauren Bacall's)
- Incomplete claims ("more flavor...")
- Meaningless words (xylonal, hexachlorophyl)
- Testimonials (by housewives, dentists, and doctors)
- Premiums (gifts inside the package)
- Animations and special effects
- Repetition
- Image advertising (happy faces, beautiful landscapes, cozy settings)

Suggested activities

Monitor TV commercials to find out the type of appeal they use to try to sell their product.

Table 5: A Chart of advertising appeals

Product advertised	Type of persuasion technique



Roy Doty/Macmillan

Commercials and nutrition

In a 1972 *New York Times* article, Joan Ganz Cooney, the president of Children's Television Workshop (CTW), expressed her concern for what commercials were doing to children's values:

Direct costs aside, the indirect costs of a commercial program are incalculable but enormous. They range from our children's bad teeth to a warped value system and the possible psychic damage that it does to hundreds of thousands of youngsters who are urged to buy and own what their parents cannot possibly afford to get them.¹⁵

When you go to the supermarket, look for products that you saw advertised on TV commercials. Write down the three main ingredients of each. Use a chart such as the one below.

Table 6: Survey of main ingredients in products

Product in TV Commercial	Main Ingredient	Second Ingredient	Third Ingredient

Nutritionist Dr. Joan Gussow, on the other hand, is more directly concerned with the poor nutrition habits which the many foods advertised to children — sugar-coated cereals, candies and snacks — can effect.

In the face of our rising medical bills, rising rates of nutrition-related diseases, rising food prices, and rising concern over how to change well established eating patterns, it simply makes no sense to permit the kind of dietary exploitation of our children which occurs on the tube.¹⁶

Resources:

Supergoop, 13 min. color film, 1975. Director: Robert Churchill, Distributor: Churchill Films.

But First This Message, 15 min. color film, 1971. Producer: Jim Herzic, Distributor: Action for Children's Television.

The Six Billion \$\$\$ Sell, 15 min. color film, 1976. Director: Carole Kahn, Distributor: Film Inc. and Consumer Reports Films.

The 30-Second Dream, 15 min. color film, 1977. Directors: Terry Bradon and Michael Lawrence, Distributor: Mass Media Ministries.

60-Second Spot: The Making of a Television Commercial, 25 min. color film, 1974. Producers: Dotty and Harey Madlin, Distributor: Pyramid Films.

Authentic Interview, 9 min. b/w film, 1974. Producer/Distributor: University of California, Extension Media Center.

It's as Easy as Selling Candy to a Baby, 11 min. 16mm color film. Produced for ACT by What's Up for Kids, Inc. and Jayam Film Productions.

Teaching Tools for Consumer Education, A monthly service from Consumers Union. Mount Vernon, N.Y.: Consumers Union. Available without charge with a class subscription to *Consumer Reports*.

The trouble with *Sesame Street* is that it's a one-way transmission of ready-made entertainment (or learning) that doesn't permit the child to respond. There are no short-cuts to learning, and certainly no substitutes for doing. "Action is only instructive," Jean Piaget tells us, "when it involves the spontaneous participation of the child, with all the tentative gropings and apparent waste of time such involvement implies."²⁰

Rose Mukerji sees the problem of children's television viewing from a different perspective. "There is a danger," she says, "when children retreat from real-life encounters into excessive television fantasy in order to avoid facing problems of reality."²¹ Children dependent on television imagery may be less able to develop their own resources for imagery, as well as their own resources for dealing with direct experience. Early in 1960, Bruno Bettelheim expressed his preoccupation in this matter:

My concern is less with content and much more with what persistent watching does to a child's ability to relate to real people, to become self-activated, to think on the basis of his own life experience instead of in stereotypes out of shows... The emotional isolation from others that starts in front of television may continue in school. Eventually it leads, if not to a permanent instability, then to a reluctance to become active in learning or in relation to other people.²²

Passivity and personal development

The New York Times reports that fifth and sixth graders from public schools visited a Bicentennial exhibit on colonial life. "Why did people in the olden days have so many musical instruments?" asked the teacher. "Because they didn't have any television," was the children's response.¹⁷

There is a lethargy which teachers have noticed emerging among students for the last 15 to 20 years. It starts in nursery school where children are reluctant to use paints and blocks put there for their creative outlet. It is evident all through elementary school in the lack of interest in every activity. By high school this need to be lost in a lethargy of inactivity may be a factor in the use of marijuana, alcohol and other drugs.

The mesmerized youngster in front of the TV set, eyes glazed, mouth open, is a familiar sight to many parents. Today's children don't seem to have "free time." Whenever they are not in school or engaged in some form of structured activity, they are watching television. Children no longer have to figure out ways to entertain themselves; they have television to do it for them. Not surprisingly, says Dorothy Cohen, "something is happening to children in their ability to do."¹⁸

The problem of passivity has to do with the medium rather than the content of television. Some experts argue that the better the program, the more insidious the effect on children. Even *Sesame Street*, with its short, unrelated segments



Edward Frascino/Random House

through which children are fed instant learning, has come under criticism. To educator John Holt,

Learning on *Sesame Street* means learning right answers that come from grownups. We rarely see children figuring out... we rarely see children doing anything.¹⁹

Resources

Morrow, James and Suid, Murray. *Media & Kids*. Rochelle Park, N.J.: Hayden Book Co. Inc., 1977.

Kosinski, Jerzy. *Being There*. New York: Bantam Books, 1972.

Phelan, Terry Wolfe. *The Week Mom Unplugged the TV's*. New York: Four Winds, 1979 (fiction, lower grades).

Streatfield, Noel. *The Children on the Top Floor*. New York: Random House, 1965 (fiction, intermediate grades).



Suggested activities other than TV

- How is watching TV different from *making* or *doing* something? Which one is more you? Make a list of all the things that you can and/or would like to make or do.
- If TV were to disappear, how would your life be different? What would you do? What games would you play? Would you be sorry? Why?
- Write a composition entitled "The Day TV Disappeared."



Violence on TV

For more than 30 years, there has been a swirling controversy surrounding violence on television and its effects on growing children's minds and behavior. As the medium has grown in sophistication, social scientists have been collecting data and assuring us that there is a real cause-and-effect relationship between the viewing of violence on television and violent behavior. As a matter of fact, according to George Gerbner's latest report: "... the consequences of growing up and living in television's violent world are more complex and even more far-reaching than the instigation of an occasional act of violence."²³

What Dr. Gerbner is saying is that counting the number of acts of violence on children's cartoons (21 per hour as opposed to 6 per hour on an adult crime drama)²⁴ is an exercise in futility unless we recognize the deep-seated and long-range effects of these statistics on our growing children and do something about it. Children are being taught that violence is necessary to resolve conflict. "What's important here," says Peggy Charren, President of the crusading Action for Children's Television, "is that it reinforces what common sense knew all along—you learn from what you see."²⁵

Q Q

Repeated exposure to violence can produce insensitivity to cruelty and violence because it gradually extinguishes the viewer's emotional responses and builds the feeling that violent behavior is normal and appropriate under some circumstances.

*Dr. Bertram S. Brown, Director
National Institute of Mental Health*

Psychiatrist Frederick Wertham explains:

We do not know all about anything with regard to human behavior. But the idea that screen violence hour after hour will have no effect on a child contradicts everyday observation and common sense. If young people watch dancing, it makes them want to dance. If they see peanut butter or soft drinks or breakfast food, they want to buy them. It cannot be sensibly argued that children who see violence on the screen do not acquire a liking for it on some level of consciousness.²⁶

Concern has been expressed about the effects of televised violence on adults as well as children. George Gerbner contends that heavy viewers are most likely to express the feeling of living in a world similar to that of TV drama, in which "... most characters feel insecure and fear victimization while some are also willing or compelled to oblige them by acting violent and thus confirming the fears of many." Gerbner is concerned that heavy viewers may find in TV a confirmation and elaboration of their own fears:

I believe that a corrosive sense of security and mistrust invites not only aggression but also repression. Fearful people are more dependant, more easily manipulated and controlled, more susceptible to deceptively simple strong, tough measures and hard-line postures—both political and religious. They may accept and even welcome repression if it promises to relieve their insecurities. That is the deeper problem of violence-laden television.²⁷



Edward Francino/Random House

The amount of violence on TV has remained fairly constant for twenty years in spite of the warnings and findings of researchers and Congressional committees. It seems entrenched because of the need for high ratings and the ease with which violence can be used to stimulate audience attention.

Alberta Siegel, who was on both the 1982 and the 1969-72 NIMH committees observed:

The majority of people seem to feel there is too much violence on television, but I don't see anybody effectively translating that opinion or the research evidence into action . . . My hunch is that when you have a medium, you're going to have a lot of violence. Comparative studies support that hunch. A privately owned, privately operated structure such as the networks may just naturally lead to the kind of content we have. If, on the other hand, television were seen as an educational medium operating on behalf of the goals of the society, as in England or Scandinavia, the situation would be quite different.²⁴

In other words, for those who are concerned about the effect of violence on TV, it doesn't seem likely that the situation will rapidly improve if one waits for the broadcasters to improve it. The broadcasters indicate that they believe the problem is minor and that the changes they have made in programming are sufficient. Public pressure may gradually generate change in their operations.

Resources:

Brown, Ray (ed.). *Children and Television*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, Inc., 1976), pp. 285-296.

Comstock, George. *Television and Human Behavior*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1978.



Maurice Sendak

Topics for discussion:

- Can you name some instances in which the image of violence is confused with the real thing?
- Why is an image sometimes more powerful than the real thing?
- Whom do you tend to identify with when watching TV violence?

Dillon, Millicent. "Kidvid Studies Have Little Impact on Programming, Stanford Expert Says." *Stanford University News Service*, July 21, 1982.

Gerbner, George. "Proliferating Violence," *Society*. September/October, 1977, pp. 8ff.

National Institute for Mental Health. *Television as a Teacher: A Research Monograph*. U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, November 1981.

National Institute for Mental Health. *Television and Behavior: Ten Years of Scientific Progress and Implications for the 80s*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1979.

"A New Indictment of TV Violence," *Newsweek*. May 17, 1982.

Osborn, D.K. and J.S., "Television Violence revisited." *Childhood Education*, vol. 53, April 1977, pp. 309-311.

Russell, Christine. "Report Links TV Violence to Aggression." *The Washington Post*, May 5, 1982, pp. 1 and A 11.

Schneider, John A. "Networks Hold the Line." *Society*. September/October 1977, p. 9ff.

Television Violence, 62-frame color filmstrip with worksheet. Learning Seed Company, 154 Brentwood, Palatine, IL 60067.

Wiley, R.E. "Violence, The Media and the School." *NASSP Bulletin*, vol. 60, May 1976, pp. 19-25. (Replay in January 1977, vol. 61, pp. 93-96 by J.F. Lagana and G. Iannaccone.)

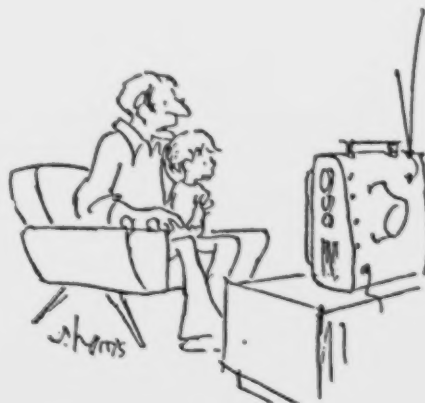
Helping children make choices

Television can teach values as well as violence; it can induce passivity or elicit vital responses. Basically it's a matter of choice. In order to learn to choose correctly, children need to share and discuss their experience of television.

By discussing commercials, children can gain an awareness of prices and of the quality of certain products, in addition to advertising gimmicks. By sharing their feelings about TV violence, they can realize that cooperation is generally a better alternative to conflict. By examining certain attitudes and values learned from television, they can decide which ones are consistent with reality and which are not.

Values and ideas are unreal if they lead into blind alleys. When personal experience belies television's messages, children become confused. They need clarification from parents and teachers. One way is to test acquired values and ideas in terms of satisfying or unsatisfying relationships with peers and adults. For example, the child who is disappointed because the teacher is not like Kotter, or the parents are not like the Bradys, may conclude that it is not a good idea to compare them. Or if the teacher explains

that TV characters are not real people, the child can understand that the comparison doesn't hold water. A girl may try hard to be popular in school by smiling and dressing like Marie Osmond. Not succeeding, she may decide that it's better to be herself. If justice is always supposed to triumph, then why did the teacher



"... No, he can't really fly ... no, the bad guys don't really have a ray gun ... no, this cereal really isn't the best food in the whole world ... no, it won't make you as strong as a giant ..."

Sidney Harris/Beacon Press

Critical thinking is not just the habit of criticizing; it involves the ability to suspend judgment, to examine before accepting, to consider alternatives before making a choice. In developing this art, children need all the help they can get — and they should get it early.²⁹

Fredelle Maynard

punish the student who didn't cheat, while overlooking the one who did? Could it be that justice only works when it is enforced?

Suggested activity

Below are some "blind alleys" (or unreal ideas) often derived from television:

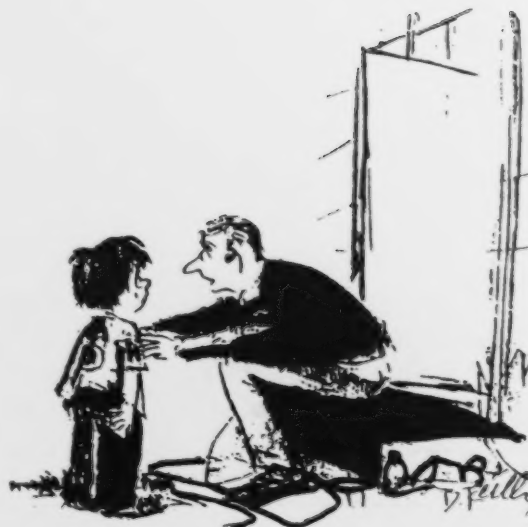
- Violence is exciting.
- Everything always works out in the end.
- Honest people are rewarded; crooks always get caught.
- Blondes have more fun.
- Success means being rich and powerful.
- Brushing with Crest makes teeth gleam.
- Good lawyers never lose cases.
- Happiness means buying anything you want.
- Women have to be good housewives.
- TV shows us how life works.
- Blacks can't be doctors.
- To be free is to be unattached.
- If I'm in trouble, someone will come to my rescue.

Can you think of some more blind alleys?

Forming social and moral values

In the process of rethinking acquired beliefs, children learn to think for themselves. They become aware of what doesn't work for them, and they begin to search for what does work. Since so many of our children's values are being formed by what comes across the screen it is only reasonable to try to use the shared experiences of television to help our students develop better decision-making processes.

Even more effective is the use of the videotape equipment in your school. Teachers can develop their own modelling tapes of desired behavior in areas such as conflict, resolution, teamwork, brainstorming and problem solving.



D. Reilly/New Yorker

"You see, son, I'm afraid the real world out there isn't much like 'Sesame Street.'"

Suggested activity: Self-awareness

Children can be helped with interpersonal relations by using a TV type format. Divide the class into small groups, and give each group a conflict situation which they are asked to role-play, using characters from favorite TV shows. Situations might be:

- tattling
- ignoring the newcomer
- cheating on a test
- teasing the poor reader
- cooperating in a game
- being a bully
- keeping someone waiting
- turning in found money

These "dramas" may be videotaped, with the children discussing the results. Your little TV studio may not have the \$3 million a network needs to produce a commercial which will reach 2 million people. However, you do have the means of dramatizing pro-social behavior and making it exciting for your students.

Resources:

Television and Values. A multimedia kit including film-strip and cassette, project cards, texts and teaching guide Learning Seed Company, 154 Brentwood, Palatine, Ill. 60067. (1976)

Citizenship in New York City: Grades K-12. A compendium of reproducible student activity sheets and suggestions for the teacher. These deal with a comprehensive range of issues: graffiti, littering, vandalism, public health, and the duties of citizens in cooperating with city services. Student response is encouraged by the illustrations and graphic variety of the activity sheets. Available from the New York City Board of Education, Curriculum Production Unit, Room 617, 131 Livingston Street, Brooklyn, New York 11201.

Choosing not to watch TV

Remember that you do not *have* to use television just because it's there. In fact, refusing to watch bad programs and helping children turn to other areas of activity is a very good idea — provided it works!



©Edward Frascino/Random House

Resource:

De Franco, Ellen B. *Alternatives to TV: Self-initiated Activities and Play*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall Learning Systems, Inc. 1977.

Suggested activity

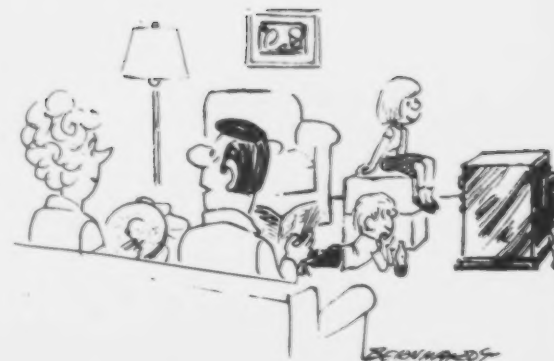
Since the viewing habits of parents influence those of their children, it is a good idea for parents to check themselves. Drawing up a weekly viewing chart, they can write in the programs watched, plus a code for the reason for viewing:

★ because I like it

— because someone else is watching it

~ to pass the time

Which programs did both parent and child enjoy?



Bernhardt

What activities can both parent and child do together instead of watching TV?

Table 7: A parents' weekly viewing chart

Day of the Week	Program 1	Reason	Program 2	Reason	Program 3	Reason
Monday						
Tuesday						
Wednesday						
Thursday						
Friday						
Saturday						
Sunday						

Teaching Strategy Four: *Role Modeling*

Grades K-2 (Puppet show)

Objectives:

- to utilize interest in TV characters to promote dramatic expression

Materials:

- Various props (e.g., a hat, a bow tie, umbrella, false moustache)
- socks and/or paper bags to make puppets
- colored paper and bits of cloth for the puppet's features
- glue, crayons, needle, thread and scissors
- cardboard box to make a stage

Procedure:

Ask the children to:

1. Name their favorite TV character and write his or her name on the board.
2. Do an imitation of their favorite character, using the props available.
3. Make a puppet simulating a TV character.
4. Talk to the puppet.
5. Stage a puppet show for the class using the cardboard box as a stage (two puppets at a time).

Grades 3-4 (Using the TV script)

Objectives:

- to act out different roles
- to distinguish between the actor and the role

Materials:

Single TV script about a hero, villain and victim, and appropriate props.

Procedure:

1. Use a TV script to read and act out in class. Give out various parts. Each student should get the opportunity to read or act out several roles.
2. Ask students to discuss which role each likes best. Least. Explain.
3. Ask the students how they play different roles in real life — one with parents, one with siblings, one with friends, one with strangers.
4. Ask the students to write a script about a real-life situation when they played a role they liked.

- For information on how to get TV scripts, see p. 14.

Grades 5-6 (Paper bag storytellers)

Objectives:

- to retell the main events in sequence of a TV program from the perspective of one of the characters.
- to write the main events in sequence of a TV program from the perspective of one of the characters.

Materials:

- area for making puppets
- scissors, glue, pipe cleaners
- paper bags, felt, assorted sizes and colors of paper, scraps of yarn and fabric

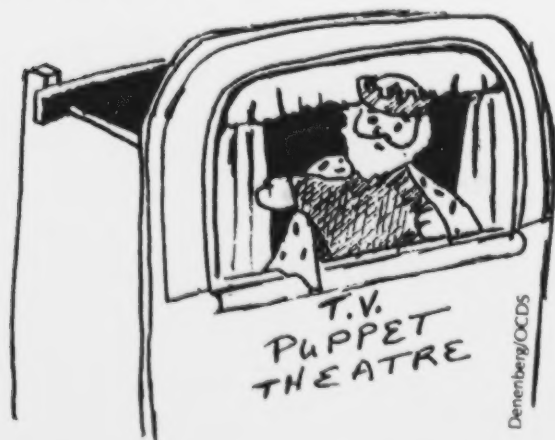
Procedure:

Give the students directions similar to the following:

1. Watch a half hour TV comedy program.
2. Choose one of the characters from the program (not necessarily the main character) and make a paper bag puppet to look like the character. The character does not have to be human — you may choose an animal, a doll, or a cuckoo clock.

Grades 5-6 (cont'd)

3. After your puppet is made, practice telling the main points of the story as you think they appeared to that character.
4. Be prepared to have your puppet tell the story to a group of classmates.



Alternative:

When the puppets are ready, divide the students into groups of four or five. The members of each group make their presentation to one another. The other puppets may ask questions of the puppet doing the talking.

Enrichment:

Have the gifted students write a script of their presentation and compile the writings into a scrapbook.

Grades 7-9 (Career education: occupations on TV)

Objectives:

- to recognize occupational roles on TV
- to distinguish between stereotypes and real people

Materials:

- bar graph paper

Procedure:

1. Many TV shows are about doctors, lawyers, fathers, detectives, housewives, athletes, teachers, etc. Ask the students to choose their favorite occupations or roles, and to name TV characters which represent these.

2. Discuss: What do these TV characters have in common? What are the signs or symbols which indicate their occupation? Do you know a person (or persons) in real life who also represents this occupation? How is he/she like or unlike the TV characters you have named?

3. Now ask the students to make a list of TV characters that they consider "winners." How many of them are lawyers, doctors, performers, teachers, businessmen, politicians, laborers, housewives, nurses, etc.?

4. What percentage of them are: white? male? American? under 35? unmarried? always cool, patient and clever? Show these percentages on a bar graph.

5. Most TV "winners" are stereotypical characters (*i.e.*, they conform to a fixed or general pattern). Ask the students to look up the word *stereotype* and to discuss whether or not they think that TV gives a fair and realistic picture of people. How do TV characters compare with real people we all know?



Assignment:

Ask the students to look for female characters and personalities when they watch TV and to list the occupations that they represent.

Teaching Strategy Five: *Fantasy*

Grades K-2 (Cartoon fantasy)

Objective:

- to understand how and why cartoon characters are unreal

Materials:

- old magazines, old comic books, or cartoon strips about TV cartoon characters
- drawing materials
- glue and scissors

Procedure:

1. Ask the students to name favorite TV cartoon characters; or hold up pictures of familiar characters.
2. Discuss: How would you describe a cartoon character? Are any of your friends cartoon characters? Do you ever run into any cartoon characters on the street? in school? in the supermarket? How come? Where *do* you find cartoon characters?
3. Cut out pictures of real settings from magazines, and TV cartoon characters from comic books or strips. Ask each student to make a collage combining the two.

4. Then ask them to make up a story. What might happen if a cartoon character were to come to school one day? How would he/she behave? What would the teacher say? Would you make friends with him/her?

Alternative:

The children can cut out cartoon characters (from old comic books or comic strips) that they recognize from TV and paste these on a piece of paper in such a way as to make a story, complete with balloons.

Another idea would be to have them create a paper character by drawing and/or cutting it out. Give it a name. Tell where it lives, what it eats and wears, and what it likes to do. Is it realistic? How so?

Grades 3-4 (Real or unreal)

Objective:

- to understand that TV superheroes and superheroines are not real

Materials:

- pictures of TV super-characters
- drawing materials

Procedure:

1. Show pictures of TV super-characters (*e.g.*, the Incredible Hulk, Superman, Spiderman, Bionic Woman, Tarzan). Discuss what these have in common. How do you feel about them? Why do you think they are so popular? What qualities do they all seem to have (courage, strength, cleverness, etc.)?
 2. Ask the students to name some more super-characters, stating the kinds of things they do that regular people cannot do.
 3. What kinds of things do regular people do that super-characters never seem to do or talk about (making the bed, waiting for the bus, going shopping, going to the bathroom, etc.)?
 4. For a Super-Character Contest, ask the students to create a super-duper character. Have them draw a picture or write a poem or a word description to illustrate his or her special qualities. (*e.g.*, flying to the moon, controlling the elements, etc.)
- Assignment:**
When you watch TV, be on the lookout for unreal things that TV characters do. Make a scrapbook entitled *TV Fantasy*, in which you write, draw or paste examples of unreal things, people, events, as they appear on TV.

Grades 5-6 (Not a happy ending)

Objectives:

- to understand that things only *seem* easy on TV
- to understand that TV presents an unrealistic picture of life

Materials:

- simple TV script (or videotape of a program, if available)

Procedure:

1. Many TV programs end happily. Ask the students to name TV programs with happy endings.

2. The students read a simple TV script with a happy ending, or if available, watch a videotaped program.

3. Discussion: Do real life situations always end happily, the way this program did? Explain. Would you watch a program if you didn't know that it was going to end well? Explain. Would you watch a program in which something bad happened to the hero; in which the villain ended up winning? Explain.

4. Ask the students to give the program a "real" or "true to life ending." They can work as a class, or in groups, discussing and scripting.

5. They can act out their new ending.

Grades 7-9 (TV versus real life)

Objective:

- to understand *how* TV programs present an unrealistic picture of life

Procedure:

1. As an assignment, ask the students to look at their favorite TV program the next time it's on and answer the following questions:

- How long did the program last?
- Did someone in the program have a problem?
- Did the problem get resolved?
- If yes, how did it get resolved?
- How did the program end?
- How often do your problems get resolved?
- By what means are they resolved?
- How different are your problems from those of the characters on your TV screen?

2. In class compare answers in small-group discussion or in whole group using the chalkboard.

3. Ask the students to read and act out a TV script. In follow-up discussion, ask these questions:

- How does the life of the main character in the script differ from your own life?
- Do you think his or her life is more exciting? How so? Is it less exciting? Explain.
- What kinds of things do you do or feel which don't seem to be part of the TV script or part of the lives of the characters in it? (For example; Do they ever seem to go to the bathroom, get bored, depressed, etc.?)
- How is the time element treated? Do you think there is *time* to show more than the essential elements of the plot?
- What things would you leave out if you had to tell the story of an incident in your life in half an hour?
- Write a short story of an exciting incident from your life. Be imaginative and include only the essential, interesting elements.

Teaching Strategy Six: *TV Commercials*

Grades K-2 (Tasty snacks)

Objective:

- to focus on nutritious snack foods

Materials:

- nutritious snack foods: fruit, vegetables, juices, granola cookies, etc.
- large cardboard box
- scissors
- different props, *e.g.*, hat, moustache, cane, etc.
- (to get ACT's nutrition kit, see address on p. 88)

Procedure:

1. Display some nutritious foods during snack time, and set up a big cardboard box to simulate a TV screen.
2. Ask each child to pick a favorite food, and to think of two reasons why he/she likes it.
3. Using a prop, ask each child to get behind the "TV set" and tell the class why he/she likes that food.
4. After the commercial, encourage the children to share the snacks.

Grades 3-4 (What are you selling?)

Objective:

- to recognize the selling purpose of TV commercials

Materials:

- Products (commercial or non-commercial) and arts-and-crafts materials

Procedure:

1. Divide the class into groups and provide each with a product.
2. Ask the students in each group to describe:
 - what the product looks like
 - what it can do; what it tastes like
 - how it's special or different from other products of the same type
3. Ask the students who they think would be most interested in buying the product. Describe the buyer according to: age; sex; income bracket; city or country.
4. Ask the students to try to "sell" their product to the class. They can write a script and act it out, using their own graphics: drawings, posters with lettering, props, etc.

Assignment:

Bring to class a snack depicted in the ACT Nutrition Kit and share it with another classmate.



Grades 5-6 (To tell the truth)

Objective:

- to focus students on what TV commercials *don't* tell us
5. Ask the students to make a poster that accurately describes a product they really like. Using cutouts, drawings, words, make the ad attractive as well as honest.

Materials:

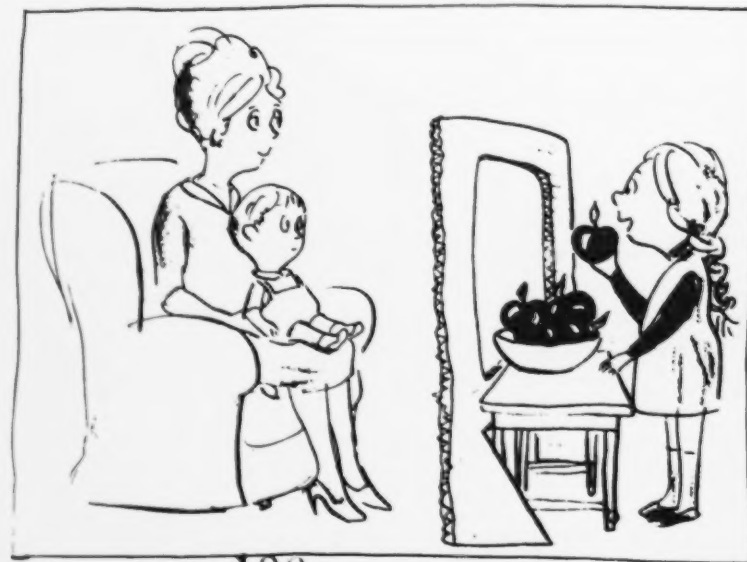
- drawing materials
- poster paper
- cut-outs and pictures

Procedure:

- Have you ever gotten a toy which seemed marvelous when advertised on TV, but which turned out to be a big disappointment? Explain.
- Ask the students to name three ways in which the commercial made them want to own the product (*i.e.*, the way it was presented; the jingle; the announcer; the setting).
- Ask the students to name some things that the commercial did *not* say (*i.e.*, the cost of the product; what it's made of; how long it's likely to last; where it can be repaired, etc.). What kinds of things would you have liked to know about the product.
- If you were warning other children about that commercial product, what would you say? Ask the students to write a rebuttal (a counter-ad) about a TV-advertised product with which they have had a bad experience, stating all the things which the TV ad did not say.

Alternative:

Have the students write a letter to the manufacturer of a product which they feel was not correctly represented on the TV commercial. They can state the problem they have had with the product; why they think that the commercial misrepresented the product; and what they would like the manufacturer to do.



Edward Frascino/Random House

Grades 7-9 ("Best" product)



Nunnally/OCDs

Language arts and social studies

Objective:

- to understand how TV commercials create the illusion that the product advertised is the "best."

Materials:

- Videotape of a TV commercial, if available.

Procedure:

1. Show a videotape of a TV commercial. If video equipment is not available, ask the students to list their favorite commercials, and to choose to discuss the one which is the most popular or familiar.
2. Discuss persuasion techniques used.
3. As a class project, make a list of images which commercials use to represent the idea of success and happiness (*i.e.*, glowing skin, flowing hair, smiling lovers, etc.).
4. Discuss the repetitive aspect of commercials. Do you think something is good because it gets repeated? Do you find yourself buying a product because you have heard and seen the commercial time after time?
5. Enter a "Funny Ad Contest." Ask the students to write a short script advertising a ficti-

tious product (*i.e.*, a bionic limb or eye, "Icky" cereal, Bubbles detergent, etc.). Make your ad as funny as possible, using the techniques learned. Divide your ad into two sections: Audio and Video.

Alternative Activities:

Photographs can be very persuasive expressions of bias. The teacher might make a collection of news photographs which have proved themselves "worth a thousand words." Some examples are:

- the famous photograph of a young girl crying over a fellow comrade at Kent State in the sixties
- the naked burning child in Vietnam
- Mrs. Kennedy in her blood spattered suit beside Lyndon Johnson as he was sworn in
- the group of Marines hoisting the flag at Iwo Jima

Virtually any current issue of the daily newspaper, a news magazine or any good collection of photographs will provide material for this exercise in examination of "visual" bias.

The teacher may show the pictures one at a time asking the class what it says to us. What emotions does it arouse? What opinions does it silently express?

Teaching Strategy Seven: *Violence on TV*

Grades K-2 (Did Daffy Duck get hurt?)

Objectives:

- to distinguish between pro-social and anti-social behavior

Materials:

- art materials
- picture(s) depicting violent action on the part of cartoon characters

Procedure:

1. Hold up a picture depicting violent cartoon action. Ask the students to describe what they see.
2. Discuss: Do you think the cartoon character got hurt? How would you feel if someone did that to you? Tell us about a time you got hurt. What did it *feel* like?
3. What makes you feel *good*? Ask the students to describe, act out, draw, or in any other way express feeling "good."
4. Ask the students to act out, together with a partner, "nice" things that they saw TV characters do with or for each other. These can include smiles, expressions of thanks, approval, praise, etc.

5. Encourage the students to use materials for the purpose of *sharing, giving, lending, or making something* for someone else in the class.

Assignment:

Next time you watch TV, look for examples of giving, lending, sharing, and making things for other people. Come to class ready to show or demonstrate it.



Locher/Chicago Tribune

Four possible solutions to a conflict situation.



Move away.



Call him names.



Hit him back.



Tell a grown-up.

Nunnally/OCDs

Grades 3-4 (Being friends)

Objective:

- to recognize pro-social behavior

Materials:

- TV scripts
- drawing materials
- clay

Procedure:

1. Ask the students to name TV characters who are *friends*.
2. Discussion: How do you know they are friends? What do people *do* when they are friends?
3. Ask the students to draw on their TV viewing experience in order to mimic, draw pictures, or make things out of clay to represent acts of friendship.

Enrichment:

1. Use a scene from a TV script which illustrates "cooperation." Ask the students to act it out with full emotion.
2. Use a scene from a TV script which illustrates the opposite of "cooperation." Ask the students to think carefully about the consequences of the action. How would these have been different had there been cooperation? Ask the students to choose a different ending for the scene and to improvise an action which would lead to that ending.

Assignment:

Students are encouraged to find examples of "cooperation" on TV, in stories, illustrations, and real life situations.

Grades 5-6 (Another way to cope)

Objective:

- to find pro-social alternatives in conflict situations

Materials:

- TV script (or videotape, if available)

Procedure:

1. The class reads a portion of a TV scene in which two characters are in conflict. (If video equipment is available, students can watch the conflict.)
2. Ask two students at a time to assume the two roles and to act out a solution to the conflict. The solution must be one in which neither character is "put down."

Enrichment:

1. Present the class with a conflict situation. For example, "You're standing on the street and some kid comes by and hits you. What do you do?"
2. Ask the students to draw pictures (with captions) depicting possible solutions to the conflict. (See samples above.)
3. The class discusses the best possible solution, taking into account specific circumstances.

Grades 7-9 (Monitoring TV violence)

Objective:

- to monitor TV violence

Materials:

- television set at home
- writing materials

Procedure:

1. As a week-long research assignment, ask the students to monitor violence on prime-time TV. The class is to be divided so that a group of students is assigned to each local TV channel. Each group is to divide viewing time among its members so that the entire prime-time schedule is covered in the course of one week. Each person is to keep a log of all violence seen during the entire period. Also, a formula or chart (such as Table 8) should be devised to include the following information:³⁰

- Date or day of the week
- Time
- Name of program
- Space for notation of each act of violence
- A brief description of the act

2. Having pooled their findings, the class;

a) counts the number of violent incidents on prime time TV.

b) indicates what percentage of them involve killing, theft, crimes of passion, etc.

c) makes a circle graph to indicate this information.

3. The class discusses:

a) the difference between getting hurt on TV and getting hurt in real life.

b) camera tricks and stunt tricks to keep the actors from hurting each other.

c) whether knowing about the unreality of TV violence can affect the way one sees it or reacts to it.

d) whether TV violence affects behavior (as observed in a younger sibling, for example).

Assignment:

Students can monitor the newspapers for incidents of violence in real life. How different is it from TV violence?

Table 8: A survey of TV violence seen in our home

Day	Time	Program	Act of Violence	A Brief Description
Mon.				
Tues.				
Wed.				
Thurs.				
Fri.				
Sat.				
Sun.				

Footnotes: Chapter 2

¹Barbara Grizzati, "How TV Can Be Good For Children," *McCall's*, October 19, 1977, pp.

²John M. Culkin, "A Schoolman's Guide to Marshall McLuhan," *Curriculum Planning* (Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1974), p. 201.

³Jeffrey Schrank, *TV Action Book* (Evanston, Ill.: McDougal, Littell and Co., 1974), p. 66.

⁴William Kuhns, ed., *Exploring Television* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1971), p. 35.

⁵Aimee Dorr Leife, Neal J. Gordon, and Sheryl Brown Graves, "Children's Television: More Than Mere Entertainment," *Harvard Educational Review* 44:2 (1974) pp. 213-245.

⁶Frank Mankiewicz and Joel Swerdlow, *Remote Control* (New York: Times Books, 1978), p. 100.

⁷*Ibid.* pp. 127-128.

⁸"Sex and TV," *Newsweek*, February 20, 1978.

⁹Rose K. Goldson, *The Show and Tell Machine* (New York: Dial Press, 1974), p. 33.

¹⁰"Sex and TV," *Newsweek*, February 20, 1978.

¹¹Robert M. Liebert, John M. Neale, and Emily S. Davidson, *The Early Window*. (New York: Pergamon Press, Inc., 1975), p. 21. Taken from S. Head, "Content Analysis of Television Drama Programs," *Film Quarterly*, 9:175-194, 1954. Copyright 1954 by The Regents of the University of California. (Reprinted by permission of The Regents.) Also F. Gentile and S.M. Miller, "Television and Social Class," *Sociology and Social Research*, (1961) 45:259-264.

¹²*Ibid.* p. 21. Taken from M. DeFleur, "Occupational Roles as Portrayed on Television," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 28:57-74, 1964, (reprinted with permission). Also D.W. Smythe, "Reality as Presented by Television," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 18:143-156, 1954.

¹³Evelyn Kaye, *How to Treat TV With T.L.C.* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1979), p. 16.

¹⁴Kaye, p. 17.

¹⁵Mankiewicz and Swerdlow, p. 181.

¹⁶Joan Gussow, "Counternutritional Messages of TV Ads Aimed at Children," *Journal of Nutrition Education* 4:2 pp. 48-52, 1972.

¹⁷Mankiewicz and Swerdlow, p. 201.

¹⁸Dorothy Cohen, "Who is Talking to Our Children," cited in Evelyn Kaye, p. 17.

¹⁹Mankiewicz and Swerdlow, p. 180.

²⁰Mankiewicz and Swerdlow, p. 178.

²¹Rose Mukerji, "TV's Impact on Children: A Checkerboard Scene," *Phi Delta Kappan*, January 1976.

²²Mankiewicz and Swerdlow, p. 179.

²³George Gerbner, "Testimony before the Subcommittee on Telecommunications, Consumer Protection, and Finance of the Committee on Energy and Commerce," United States House of Representatives, Washington, D.C., October 21, 1981.

²⁴Jeffrey Schrank, *Understanding the Mass Media* (Skokie, Ill.: National Textbook Company, 1975), p. 31.

²⁵Peggy Charren, as quoted in "A New Indictment of TV Violence," *Newsweek*, May 17, 1982, p. 112.

²⁶Frederick Wertham, *Seduction of the Innocent* (New York: Rinehart, 1954).

²⁷Gerbner, "Testimony before the Subcommittee."

²⁸Alberta Siegel as quoted in "KidVid Studies have Little Impact on Programming Stanford Expert Says," Stanford University News Service, Stanford, CA., July 1982.

²⁹Evelyn Kaye, p. 81.

³⁰Jeffrey Schrank, p. 35.

3. Understanding the TV World

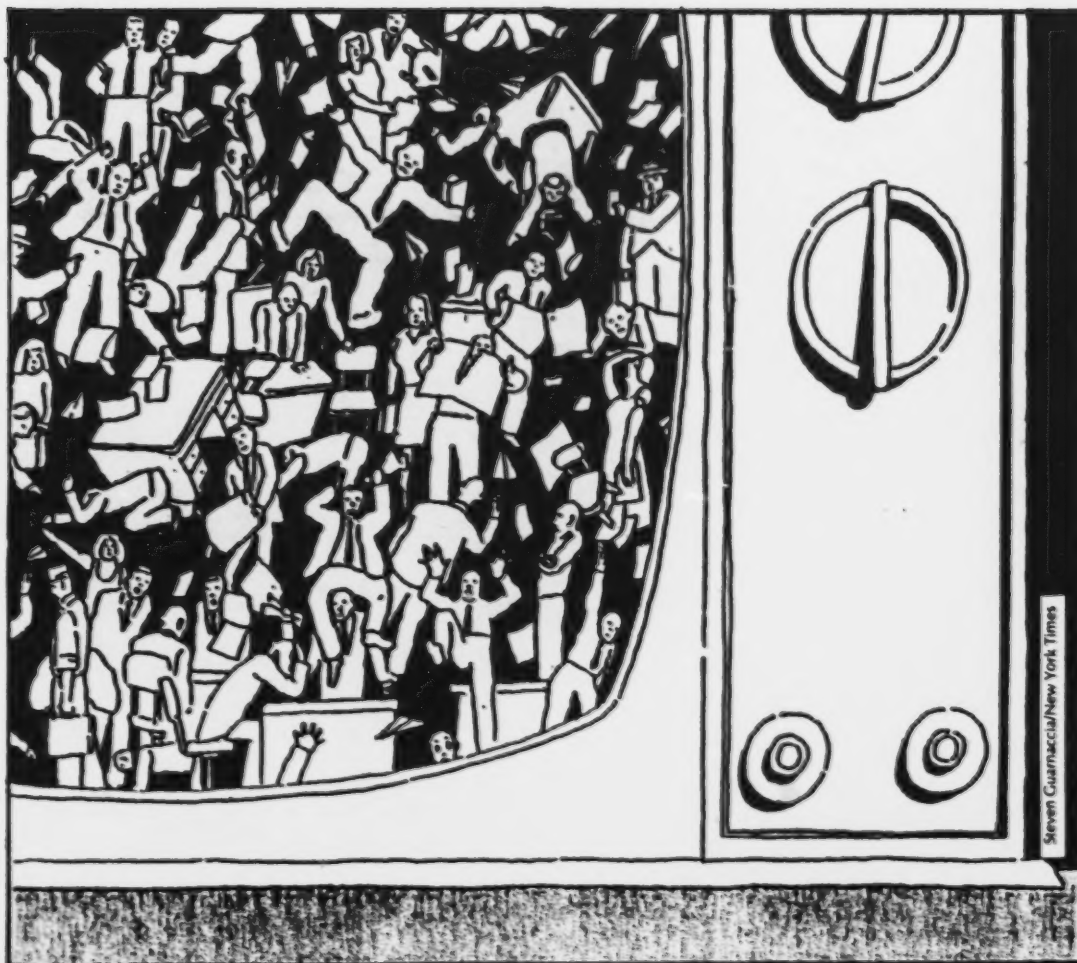
The American people should know more about television, both as an art form and as an industry. They should know the good and the bad, and how to tell the difference. They should bring to television the same sense of understanding — and criticism — that they bring to other forms of communication.

*Gene Jankowski
President of the CBS Broadcast Group*

The medium of TV

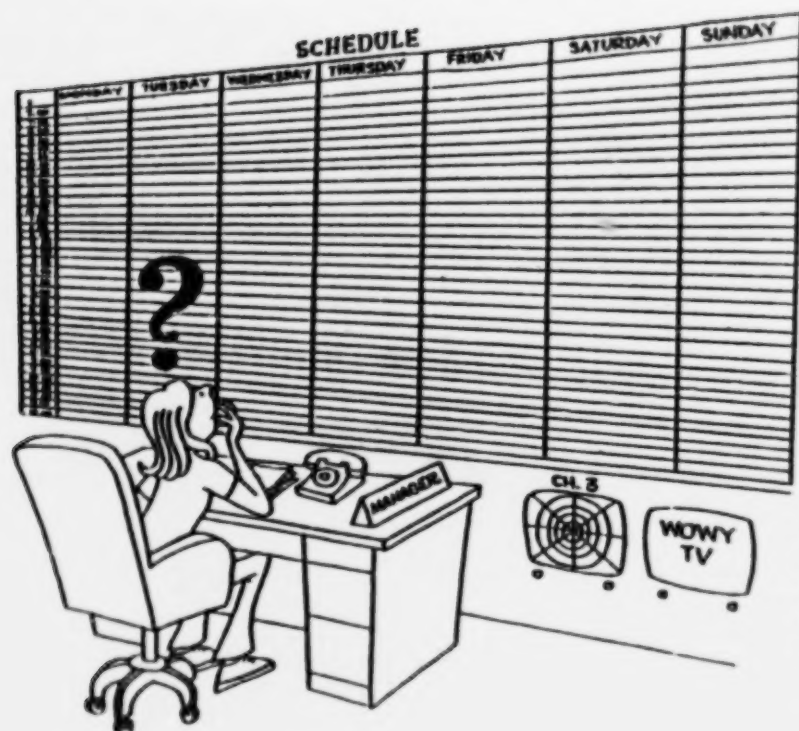
Most television viewers turn on the set and watch whatever program is on. The networks estimate that over 65 percent of an audience for one show doesn't bother to change channels or turn off the set when the next program comes on.

This may explain why (according to a Harris poll finding) one out of every four viewers "feels guilty" about the time spent watching.¹ Also, it may explain the theory of LOP (Least Objectionable Program), which deals with why some interesting programs die, while some poor programs thrive. A weak show against a weaker show inevitably looks good; it may even look like a hit and get good ratings. A strong show against a stronger one in the same time slot will look weak, regardless of merit.²



Steven Guarnaccia/New York Times

TV programming



Roy Derry/Adams

TV viewers have a voracious appetite for programming. Television has to depend on convention rather than on quality and originality. "The large demand for creative input is unceasing," says CBS President Gene Jankowski:

In one week, TV goes through more original material than Broadway offers in a year. That's why it's easy to understand why programming a well-balanced, well-written, well-scheduled, critically acclaimed, highly-rated, award-winning series of programs is a bit of a challenging task... the most amazing thing about TV – considering the size of its appetite – is not that it's so bad, but that it's so good.

Scheduling

To quote David Brinkley, "Television may be lousy, but it's on time." TV programs are generally scheduled into regular, weekly time slots. "Specials" are not regular programs since they occur sporadically. Some programs such as serials, documentaries and movies are finished products. Others, such as news shows, talk shows, and panel discussions, are part of the "pie formula" system of programming – the format is always the same, but the filling changes. These programs are partly scripted, partly ad-libbed.³

Suggested activities



4-10

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The Register and Tribune
Syndicate, Inc.

Bill Keane/Register and Tribune

"Between the dark and daylight,
When the night is beginning to lower,
Comes a pause in the day's occupation
That is known as the children's hour."

Devise your ideal prime-time TV schedule, including only those programs you like, even though they may be on in the morning.

Compare your ideal schedule with other people's in the class.

Which programs are the "Top 5" for your class?

To demonstrate the voracious appetite of television programming, play a nostalgic game. Depending on the age of the students, see how many can remember their favorite program at the age of 3 or 4 or 5. Ask how many still watch reruns of *I Love Lucy*. See how many have seen reruns of the old *Superman* series or of the fabled *Batman* series.

The teacher may want to share some of his/her favorite TV memories of childhood — programs which the students may never have heard of.

Take an informal survey to find out how students feel about watching a rerun that is obviously ten or more years old (for example, *Hogan's Heroes*) some of whose actors may now be dead.

Another variation would be to play the spin-off game. See how many programs students can name which are spin-offs of successful series. (For example, *Lou Grant*, *Phyllis*, and *Rhoda* are spin-offs of *Mary Tyler Moore*. *Mork and Mindy* and *Laverne and Shirley* were originally spin-offs of *Happy Days*. *Fish* was an ill-fated spin-off of *Barney Miller*. One of the doctors from *M.A.S.H.* appears 20 years later in *Trapper John, M.D.*) Then go on to see which characters would make good spin-offs. How about Archie Bunker's daughter living in California? The possibilities are unlimited. The reporter on *The Incredible Hulk* gets his own series. Or how about *Rossi Goes to New York*? or Hot Lips goes into civilian life? Or Hawkeye goes back home to Maine?

Table 9: My ideal prime-time TV schedule

	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.
7:30							
8:00							
8:30							
9:00							
9:30							
10:00							

TV formats

news
documentary
public affairs
talk show
sports
movies
variety
adventure show
crime story
situation comedy
general drama
soap opera
quiz and game show
concerts
cartoons
children's variety
children's science fiction



Popular programs

Movies are the most popular entertainment on television, accounting for more than half of all prime-time network programming. Other types of programs enjoying large audiences are variety shows, situation comedies, dramas, adventure and talk shows. Certain shows have "target audiences." For example, soap operas and game shows are usually watched by housewives. News

and documentary shows tend to be watched by people who are well-informed.

Most children under 10 watch animated cartoons, which ABC, CBS and NBC broadcast nationally on Saturday mornings. They are the least expensive programs to produce, and they can attract the broadest span of the available child audience.

Since Saturday morning is the best time to "sell" the 2-11 audience, advertisers and networks are more than cautious about changing the cartoon format. The fall 1980 season saw several spinoffs of familiar cartoon characters — creating such strange situations as *Fred Flintstone meets the Schmoo*.

The only attempt at live programming for the Saturday slot is a pro-social newcomer on NBC, *Drawing Power*, which concerns a group of three cartoonists challenged to create pro-social cartoons.

In contrast to the cartoon trend, TV shows such as *Captain Kangaroo* and *Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood* present live programming to children: live animals, storytelling, puppets, sing-alongs.

Children develop a taste for "adult" programs very quickly. Even in the early grade-school years, they watch more adult programs than children's shows, mainly because there are a lot more of these available.⁴

Suggested activity

The formats of popular game shows (e.g., *Jeopardy*, *Password*, or *\$20,000 Pyramid*) can be used to help build skills, strengthen and reinforce many curriculum areas, or as review before tests. *To Tell the Truth* is a great format for history class.

Competition and profits

The purpose of commercial television is to attract the largest share of the available audience. The bigger a network's share of the audience, the more it can charge for the time it sells to advertisers. It is this money which provides broadcasters with the funds to buy and produce programs, and also of course, with profits.⁵

Network programs are planned from one to three years in advance. Hollywood studios compete with one another to sell their pilots to the networks. The networks, in turn, compete with each other for television viewers. At each network, top programming executives are under pressure to pick consistent "winners," otherwise they are quickly replaced.

The really enormous profits in television production are made in syndication. Syndication is the transaction in which programs that have finished, or are about to finish their prime-time run, are sold for mass reruns to stations around the country.⁶

TV commercials

Commercial television is an advertiser-supported medium. It exists by selling time to advertisers, who in turn use that time to sell their products.

Television "works" because people tend to buy what they see and hear. In fact, television is the most effective advertising medium there is.

Several years ago, the manufacturer of Lestoil undertook a \$9 million TV ad campaign and watched his sales go from 150,000 bottles annually to 100 million in three years, even while competing with Proctor and Gamble, Colgate, and others. Similarly, the Dreyfus Fund saw its assets go from \$95 million to \$1.1 billion in six years.⁷

Because of television's advertising potential, popular TV programs are colossal money-makers

for the networks. *Happy Days*, the nation's number-one prime-time program in 1978, had approximately 52 million viewers. ABC charged \$60,000 to show this audience a 30-second commercial.⁸

For Saturday morning "Kidvid" programs, the networks are able to charge advertisers as much as \$11,000 for a single minute of commercial time. In fact, during these network shows often the only live people on the screen are in commercials.⁹

Suggested activities

- Commercials are not only sales tools. They are one of the most visible aspects of our economic system, as well as an important source of information. What would a world without advertising be like? What would shopping be like? Can you write a story or description of such a world?
- The *Sugar Bowl* can attract 75 million viewers. Can you identify some of its sponsors? What kinds of products are advertised? Can you draw conclusions about its target audience?
- Monitor TV for commercial interruptions. Watch one station for one hour at any time of the day or night, and note the target audience: children? teens? women? men? senior citizens?

Table 10: A monitor of audiences for TV commercials

Date	Time	Advertised Product	Target Audience

Ratings

Commercial television is ruled by ratings. It is the ratings which determine what shows get on the air and for how long.

Ratings measure the size and the quality of an audience — its interest in the product advertised and its buying potential. They determine how much a show's advertising time-slots will sell for. Basically, programs are selected according to the size and demographic characteristics of this audience. High ratings mean that a large number of viewers are watching a program.

"Rating points" measure the number of households watching a program at any given time. But which households? That's a big secret. The A.C. Nielsen Company of Chicago has little black boxes attached to the television sets of about 1,170 homes across the country. These black boxes, or audimeters, are activated when the set is on and make a taped record of the time and station. The "Nielsen families" mail this tape back to Nielsen headquarters every two weeks, for which they receive (according to the *New York Times*) \$2.00 per month.¹⁰

The networks

There are three major networks — ABC, CBS, and NBC — and 975 TV stations in the United States (including the UHF band, where one finds most public stations). Of these commercial VHF

stations, 600 are affiliated with one of the networks. The remaining 359 are independent, and a few of these are non-commercial. The networks own five stations apiece. Each network owns one station in three of the largest markets, which are New York, Chicago and Los Angeles.¹¹

The networks command 91 per cent of the huge national audience (75 million viewers in prime-time). Independent and educational channels get the rest.

Alternatives to commercial TV

There are two existing alternative structures to commercial television: non-commercial (public TV) or pay television (Cable TV). Another recent phenomenon is the home movie idea which operates primarily in the evenings.

In 1967 Congress created the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) as a central funding source for non-commercial broadcasting. Public television, or the Public Broadcasting System (PBS), has not yet reached an audience that makes it competitive with commercial stations in the ratings. The most popular public television programs in prime time, *The Forsythe Saga* or *Upstairs, Downstairs*, rarely achieved ratings that were even comparable to the poorest rated prime-time commercial programs.¹²



Regulation of TV

The National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) represents the interests of most commercial television and radio stations. It engages in extensive public relations and lobbying for the broadcast industry and administers the NAB code, which sets self-regulatory standards for TV and radio programs and commercials.

The code covers three areas:

- program content
- commercial content
- amount of time permitted for advertising

Not only does the code forbid misleading advertising and harmful situations on the programs, but it also suggests positive improvements such as the integration of pro-social behavior and positive values in program material.

Television and radio are also regulated by the government, since they use public airways. The regulatory agency is the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), which grants licenses to broadcasters for a period of three years.

The FCC consists of six commissioners and a chairman, all appointed by the President for a seven-year term. They are responsible for the licensing and regulation of broadcast channels in the United States. It is the duty of the FCC to

select the best qualified local TV station operators and to review their performance periodically to determine if they are meeting the needs of the community. According to the Communications Act of 1934, stations must be operated "in the public interest, convenience and necessity." In other words, broadcasters must accept certain restrictions when they apply for, and accept, a government license. (See pp. 95-99)



Many of society's battles are now being fought over what should or should not be shown on television, particularly to children. Since there are no coherent standards of censorship, TV producers like to hold up the infringement of First Amendment rights as a defense of their position. Actually, the First Amendment pro-

tections the news media, but not television, which is subject to FCC standards (pp. 95-99). If there is any "freedom of speech" to be protected in television, it is that of the viewing public.¹³

As we move into the 80s there are definite signs of the FCC taking a firmer hand in controlling children's television. They are considering a proposal which would require United States stations to carry at least seven and a half hours of instructional television every week. Few people really believe that FCC mandates will significantly improve the quality of television programming for children. As one FCC commissioner, Tyrone Brown, has said, "The Commission will not have accomplished much if broadcasters sacrifice quality in children's programming for the security of numbers."

Topics for discussion:

1. What is the First Amendment?
2. What countries do you know in which TV is government controlled?
3. What is TV like in countries where TV is government controlled?
4. How would you feel if our TV were controlled and operated by the government?
5. Why do you think TV needs to be regulated by the government?

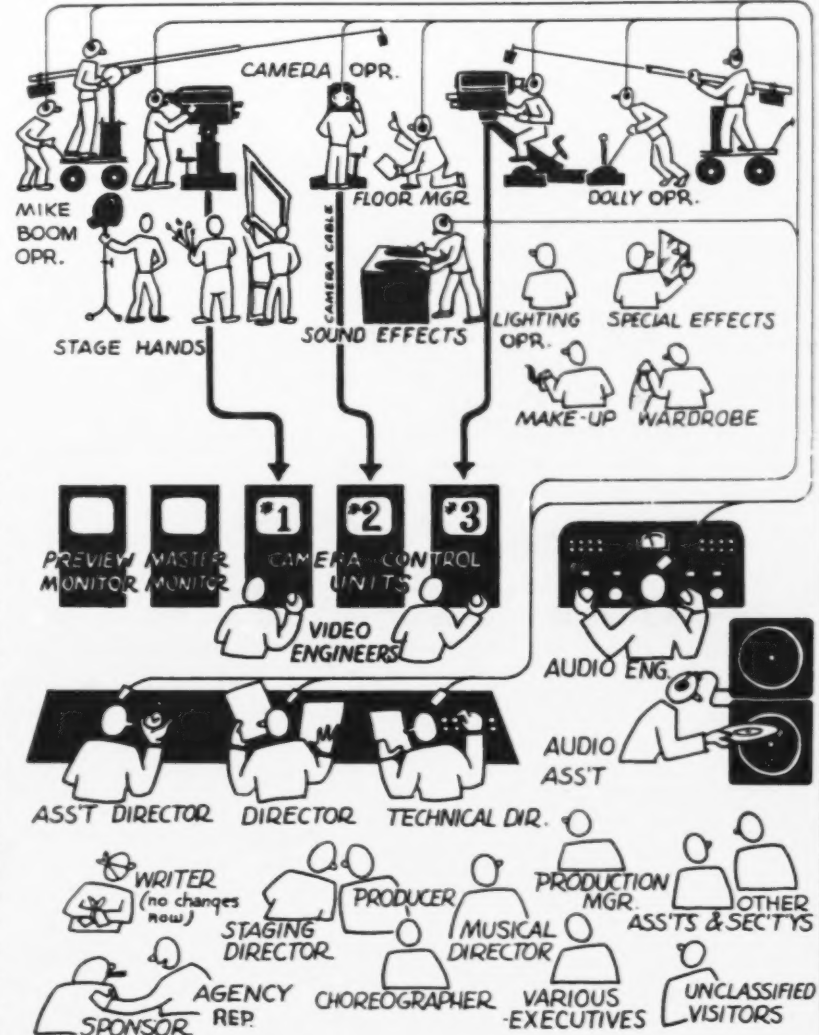
TV production

Television is the *process* of transmitting images and sounds instantaneously to millions of people at the same time. It is the communication of events as they are taking place, while the viewer receiving the communication experiences "being there."

Even though television is the offspring of theatre, film, and radio, it is distinct from all three. In the theatre, the viewer is restricted in his vision of the action by his position relative to the stage. The TV viewer, on the other hand, always has the best view of the action and close relationship to the actors.

Film records and preserves movement. Radio broadcasts sound. Television, by contrast, broadcasts and preserves both images and sounds as they are happening.

Studio and control-room personnel involved in a large-studio production. Musicians and performers are not shown. Observers at the rear of the control room are rarely all present at the same time, but all can have access to the control room. It is common practice for the video engineers and the audio engineers each to have their own control room, or glassed-in cubicle adjacent to the production control room.



Stashett and Bretz/Farrar, Siraus & Giroux

TV transmission

In the beginning, most TV shows were done "live": they were transmitted as they were being acted out. The result was often a comedy of errors because the director didn't have full control of the situation. Actors would "die," and then be seen walking off the set because a camera had been left on by mistake. At the beginning of the 1950s most television shows were telefilms or serials filmed for television in Hollywood and the big studios. The big breakthrough came in 1955, when the invention of videotape gave television the flexibility needed to produce programs that were at once "live" and preservable, thus capable of being edited.

Many viewers are probably unaware that most talk shows and interviews are pre-recorded. They are taped, edited, and replayed at some later time. What is seen then is the *illusion* of a "live" program.



Not all TV programs require that "live" quality, that sense of immediacy and intimacy with the performer, to be effective. Most dramatic and documentary productions are filmed or taped, for replay. But timebound, non-dramatic pro-

grams are usually broadcast "live." These include sports and special events, panel contests and audience participation programs, public affairs presentation and musical variety shows. It is important that these shows be taking place as they are being watched, since their open-ended quality is part of the excitement.¹⁴



The TV image

A mechanical means of transmitting sights and sounds, television is also an art form because it creates images of people, places and events. These images are illusions of reality. They recreate reality according to the director's point of view.

The TV camera

What we see on television as well as *how* we see is carefully predetermined. The camera selects and it also interprets. It can concentrate, intensify, blur and distort. It is the mind and the heart, not merely the eye, that create *long shots*, *close-ups* or *medium shots*. Thus the emotions and impressions that we experience are the result of the camera's "behavior."¹⁵

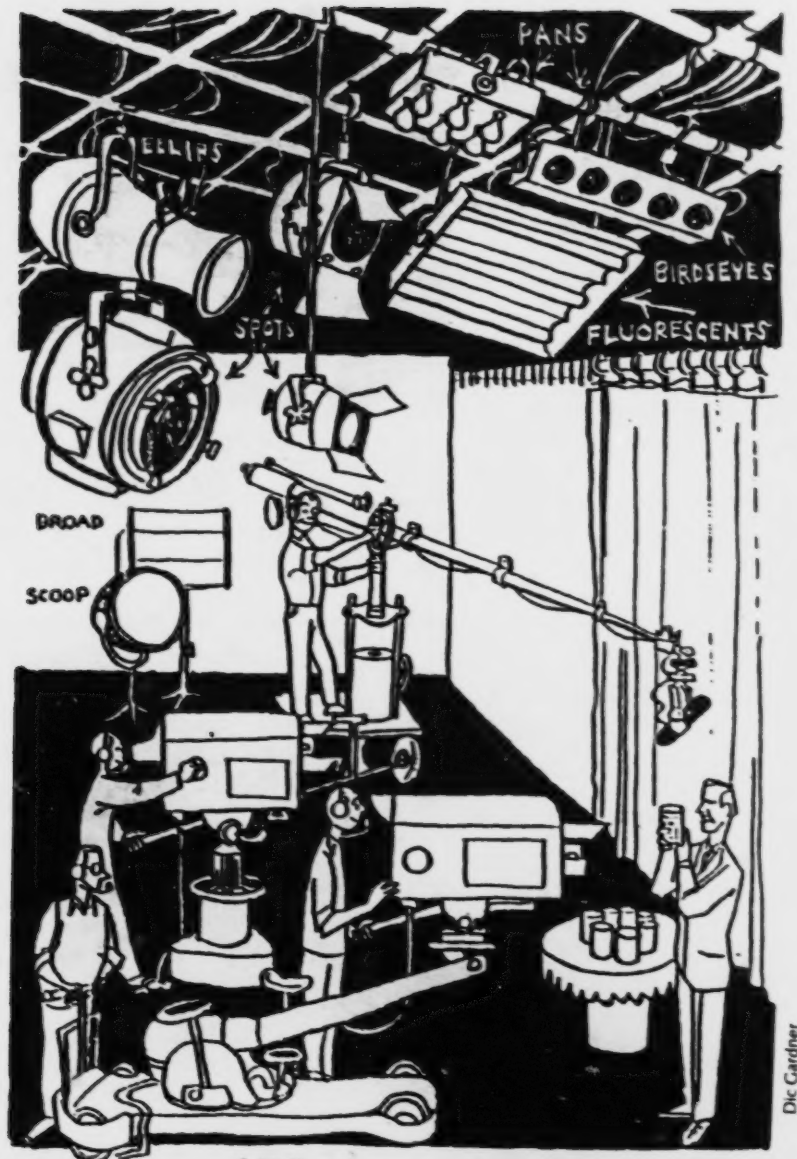
To give a scene its unity and dynamic quality, the camera must keep changing its point of view. Several cameras with zoom lenses can move in and out of a given subject from various angles. They can create an interesting sequence of pictures. This is why public events are often more fun to watch on television. The all-seeing eye of television sees more, and it sees more intensely.

Topics for discussion:

Can you spot some images on TV that one pair of eyes couldn't possibly see?

Can you tell which shows are broadcast "live" and which aren't?

Can you explain why the worker who edits the tape is a very important person in the process of creating a TV production?



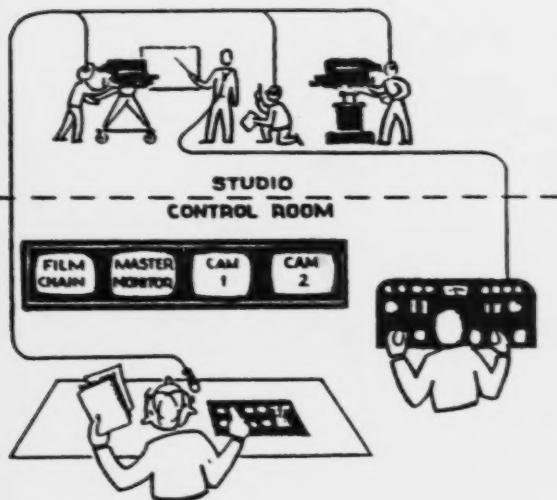
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TV production control center and crew

The camera people receive their instructions of what shots to take from the production control center. In this room a row of picture monitors gives a continuous view of what the cameras in the studio are seeing. Facing the picture monitors sit the director and the assistant director. The director instructs the studio crew over a talk-back microphone, guiding all their moves. The assistant director checks timing and calls out the shot numbers. Also in the control room are the technical director, in charge of the show's technical operations, and the lighting director.

A floor manager, at least three cameramen, and an audio technician are on the studio floor. The floor manager receives the instructions from the director through the talk-back microphone and transmits them to the rest of the studio crew. The audio technician holds the microphone and adjusts the boom to pick up the desired sounds. Meanwhile, an audio control person, a video control person, and at least one tape operator tape the television production.

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Stasheff and Bretz/Farrar, Straus & Giroux

The production

The production of a television show is a collaborative effort of different talents. The producer defines the project, figures out the budget, finds the sponsor and hires the director, the writer and the performers. The director is in charge of coordinating the entire operation. Other members of the production include the set designer, make-up artist, wardrobe person, etc.

Composition

A scene is staged by grouping people higher or lower, closer or farther from the lens. The director chooses the background and selects the portion of the scene which shows the subject to best advantage. The director also handles the camera, *panning* left or right, tilting up and down, *dolly*ing in or pulling back, until the desired shot has been selected. A shot can be placid or dynamic, depending on what characteristics the director wants to highlight for the subject. Importance or insignificance can be conveyed in a variety of ways. A big *close-up* provides dramatic emphasis. An extreme *long-shot* can dwarf an actor against his background.



Dic Gardner

A glossary of camera terms

zoom in camera moves closer, making the person or object on the screen look bigger

zoom out camera moves away, making the person or object on the screen look smaller

fade-in change slowly from a black screen to a picture

fade-out change slowly from a picture to a black screen

cut an instantaneous picture change accomplished either by the camera or in the videotape editing process.

take one of several attempts to film or videotape a scene

dissolve fading into new scene while fading out of old

a one-shot a shot of one person or object; also used to mean a single performance not scheduled for rebroadcast

a two-shot a shot of two people or objects

close-up performer's head and shoulders

medium-shot shows a person from about the waist up with some of the background

long-shot a shot in which the subject takes up less than half of the screen

establishing shot a wide angle camera view that establishes the total scene for the audience

pan to move the camera horizontally, from left to right

boom to move the camera vertically, up or down

voiceover an off-camera narration or voice



LONG



MEDIUM



CLOSE-UP



HEAD



BUST



WAIST



FULL-LENGTH



WIDE



TIGHT

Filmic time and space

To show a central action, rapid transitions in time and space must be made. In filmic space, two actions taking place simultaneously in different places are shown juxtaposed, *i.e.*, the camera cuts from a man with his children in the park to his wife back home. In filmic time, two events occurring at different times are shown happening in succession, *i.e.*, the camera cuts from a car drawing up, to the driver entering his apartment.

Time and space in film can be rearranged on the editor's bench. Television utilizes *dissolves* and

A DISSOLVE



SPECIAL EFFECTS



Dick Gardner

special camera effects. Lapses in time are depicted in several ways. Transition can be shown by a clock, a burning candle, or an hour-glass. Changes in lighting can also show transition of time: a room that earlier was sunlit is now dark;

daylight quickly fades... the moon rises. Another method is to show a subject before and after use. For example, the camera can dissolve from a freshly laid fireplace to the fire's spent ashes. Transitions can also be made by means of sounds: a clock chiming; going from night noises (owls, frogs) to morning sounds (birds, roosters); the boom of bombs and shrapnel fading into the silence after the battle.

Longer time lapses require slightly different techniques: a calendar losing its leaves or changing dates; seasonal changes, such as spring flowers fading into winter snow; changes in personal appearance, differences in clothing style, beard growth, wrinkles; or dissolving from a symbol of one age to that of another, from a small village to a bustling town.

The "flashback" device can give the idea of going back in time to see events that happened before the present action. As the speaker remembers, we see "mist" or a *dissolve* after which the image of the past comes into focus.

Dramatic effects

To achieve maximum dramatic effect the camera needs to show only a minimum of action and movement: A door opens... the young girl looks up... horror spreads over her face... a hand flicks open a knife... a lace curtain flutters before an open window... the girl screams... a thud is heard... her body lies limp on the floor.

The mood of a scene is created through lighting and atmospheric conditions. Lighting concentrates the viewer's attention, revealing form, texture, surface design. Each type of light – sun, moon, candle, neon – sets its own particular tone. Darkness subdues and conceals. Shadows create mystery. Atmospheric conditions, such as howling winds, gathering clouds, calm waters, define a scene and influence action.

Topics for discussion:

Using words instead of a camera, describe something or someone as a long shot; a medium shot; or a close-up.

What kinds of word transitions would you use to: cut? dissolve?

How would you narrate an action? Would you: zoom in? zoom out? pan?

Blocking out the TV script

The TV director thinks in terms of images. He visualizes each section of the script, seeing the actors in terms of camera shots, contrast, tone. At any given moment, the speaker must be on the screen when speaking, the reactor when reacting, the object when spoken about. Every movement must be plotted out to create the best possible picture.

In short, the viewers must be given *what* they want to see *when* they want to see it.

The person who does all this pre-planning is called the director. He must carefully mark the script with terms such as:

- zoom in
- zoom out
- cut to close-up
- cut to medium-two shot
- fade in to long shot

This script with special instructions is given to the whole technical crew – not just the camera man. Even if some workers don't agree with his instructions, they follow them in the interests of order and efficiency. The director must understand the ideas being presented as well as the technological equipment involved. The program cannot be any better than the director's original blocking. (A glossary of camera terms is found on p. 69.)



Edward R. Murrow High School

Resources:

- Dic Gardner. *Be on TV*. New York: The John Day Company, 1960.
- Michael Murray. *The Videotape Book: A Basic Guide to Portable TV Production*. New York: Taplinger Publishing Co., 1975.
- Grayson Mattingly and Welby Smith. *Introducing the Single Camera VTR System: A Layman's Guide to Video Recording*. New York: Scribner's, 1973.
- John Lidstone and Don McIntosh. *Children as Filmmakers*. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Co., 1970.
- Dr. Roy P. Madsen. *Animated Film: Concepts, Methods, Uses*. New York: Pitman Publishing Co., 1969.
- Edward Stasheff. *The Television Program: Its Direction and Production*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1976.
- Neil Postman. "The First Curriculum: Comparing School and Television." *Phi Delta Kappan*, November, 1979, pp. 163-168.

Working with equipment

Television programs are like magician's tricks — their entertainment value depends on the illusion of effortlessness. TV newscasters, for example, project an image of omniscience and analytical authority by delivering their information scarcely glancing at the notes on their desks. Of course they have been busy all day writing and memorizing those notes, and if they happen to forget, they can always glance at the teleprompter.

A youngster who is unaware of the rehearsal time and the technical tricks which create the illusion of effortlessness may compare himself negatively to performers on TV and attribute to them undue skill and authority. This negative comparison may then contribute to a sense of inferiority and to passive viewing behavior.

An opportunity to dispel some of the magical power of TV is offered when students can visit an actual TV studio. (The chart on this page lists Board of Education facilities where such visits can be arranged.) The visit can be planned to help the student realize that the effort which goes into producing a TV show can be seen as a number of specific steps which the student can learn to perform.

First, the student will be introduced to the two-sided nature of TV equipment. On the one hand, the equipment has been carefully designed to do

its job well. Even students who are intimidated by technology in general will find they can manipulate it easily. On the other hand, the equipment cannot put together the show all by itself. Planning, teamwork, and concentration are forms of effort that students often do not realize are required. It often happens that when a school has equipment available, it is not used because the students' initial excitement and enthusiasm dissipate in the face of the work required to make a good production.

To replace intimidation or carelessness with the appropriate respect for equipment, students can each have an opportunity, in a short visit to a studio, to practice the following:

- open and close the iris of the camera
- focus
- zoom in and zoom out
- pan right and pan left
- tilt up and tilt down
- dolly the camera in and out
- frame long, medium, and close-up shots

Recording deck

Students may have time to learn to thread the recording deck, or to insert the tape cartridge, and to operate the controls.

If the studio has editing facilities, a demonstration of editing is one of the clearest examples of how the illusion of effortless perfection can be created through technical means. The best moments of several different takes of a scene can be edited to give the impression of one flawless performance.

Special effects generator

The special effects generator (SEG) gives the most dramatic experience of how technical tricks have been designed into the equipment. Students should practice switching, fading, keying, and special effects until they realize that operation of the equipment simply depends on knowing which buttons to push, which is in turn the result of practice.

The trip to the studio will be useful if the students carry away with them the sense that the technical operation of the equipment is a skill which it is within their capacity to learn. This awareness of how the shows are made will make them more active viewers of TV. The trip will be even more useful if their practice with the equipment is focused on a presentation which they have prepared in advance.

Many of the lesson plans included in this book give specific suggestions for projects which could be taped during a studio visit, if well planned in

advance. Strategies 5 **Fantasy** (p. 47), 6 **Commercials** (p. 49) 7 **Violence on TV** (p. 52), 9 **Camera Work** (p. 79), and 10 **News Broadcasting** (p. 82) could each be used. Keep in mind that a final tape of only a minute or two will be quite enough to learn and practice the basic skills within the time limits of a single visit. A well rehearsed exercise will require a practice run-through and probably several takes. Each take should be replayed and discussed to work out any problems. The final product may require the editing together of parts of several tapes. Thus the taping of a two-minute segment can easily take an hour or more.

If the decision is made to do some taping in the studio, preparations should include an understanding of both the technical and the human requirements. On the technical side, the terms used in the above discussion should be understood by the class. Each studio director will have his own expectations of what the class will know when they arrive (see chart). Some students might prepare themselves to handle the cameras during the taping. They should be familiar with the framing of the shots that will be used (see page 69) and should practice with the performers and the director to be in the correct positions.

Beyond the technical aspects of how a TV studio works, there are other broader verities which can be communicated to the young student.

Planning

To be sure that everyone understands the relation of sound to picture, as well as the cues for speaking and for camera cuts and moves, it is very helpful to complete a story board (see *sample*). The story board will be the basis for all rehearsals. In addition to script and images it should include camera instructions and directions to the performers. Working on the story board will give an experience of the precision of detail with which each moment of a TV show is planned.

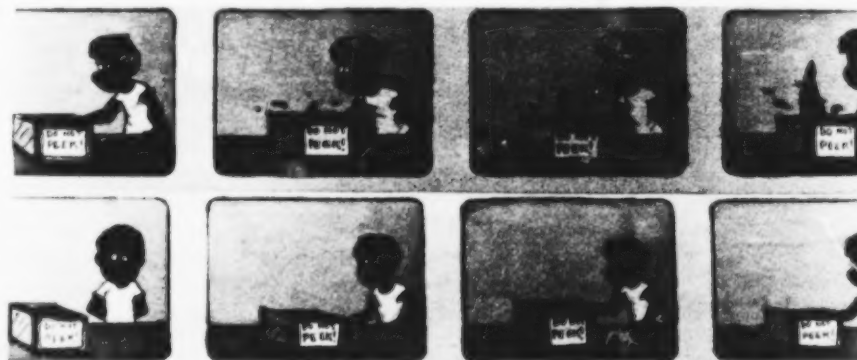
Teamwork

The key to teamwork is an understanding of the requirements of each other's jobs. To build that understanding students should exchange jobs during rehearsals so they can experience directly each other's points of view and problems. It is easy to see that a few students can disrupt an entire production. It is even more important to realize that a successful production is the work not of a few stars, but of an entire team.

Concentration

One of the great differences between characters on TV and the actors who portray them is that whereas the characters experience never a dull moment, actors must be able to wait patiently for hours between scenes, or play the same scene many different times and yet give the impression that each moment is happening for the first time. To give this impression, they must be able to concentrate on their roles, forget the hours of waiting, and forget the onlookers. Technicians also need this concentration. Their job may seem unimportant, but if the cameraperson, for example, jiggles the camera at the wrong moment, the whole scene may have to be redone.

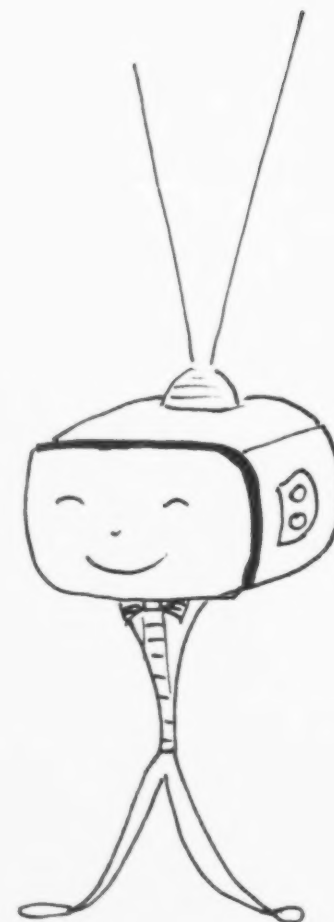
The well planned studio visit can alter a student's basic relationship to TV. If the skills required are experienced as learnable and the hardware is seen as a well-designed tool, then the student may gain a sense that what appears on the screen is not out of his or her eventual control.



Grace George Alexander-Greene

The studio visit

SCHOOL AND LOCATION	CONTACT PERSON AND TELEPHONE	NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO MAY VISIT	SUGGESTIONS FOR PRE-TRIP ORIENTATION
John Bowne 63-25 Main Street Flushing, New York 11367	Philip Scutzman 263-1919	30	Learn terminology: cameras, scripts, monitors and lighting.
John Dewey 50 Avenue X Brooklyn, New York 11223	Alan J. Siegel	25-30	Terms: Cameras, Monitors, SEG. Emphasize concept of school studio as microcosm of actual TV studio. "Quiet on the set."
Tottenville High School 100 Luten Avenue Staten Island, New York 10312	B. Springstead 356-2220	30	Orient students to names of equipment.
Edward R. Murrow High School 1600 Avenue L Brooklyn, New York	Donald Pitkoff 258-9283	35	Explain career opportunities in communications. Safety, following instructions.
August Martin High School 156-10 Baisly Boulevard Jamaica, New York 11434	Steve Peters	15	Teach roles of various production people in getting a production ready.
WNYE-TV 112 Tillary Street Brooklyn, New York 11201	Phillip Lewis 596-5064	30	Focus on instructional TV station. Who is the largest audience?



TV news

TV images play a serious role in shaping public opinion. According to 1979 Roper Organization study (commissioned by the Television Information Office), 64 percent of Americans get most of their news from television.

TV editors and reporters control the flow of news received by the public. They also create news by carefully presenting certain images instead of others. How a subject is treated (or not treated) on television determines to a great extent how the nation perceives it. For example, demonstrations are largely created by television. Since every demonstration aims to reach a wide audience, the presence of the TV camera can influence public opinion. The peace marches of the sixties are evidence of this; so is the Vietnam War itself. For the first time in history television brought into the American home gruesome depictions of corpses and the homeless, wailing, napalm-burned victims. From a military standpoint, these pictures were highly demoralizing; politically, they put the United States in an untenable position.

Most often, television opts for what is most dramatic. Nighttime fires are chosen over daytime ones. News of action and violence are preferred to non-action, non-violent news. This is why the peaceful instances of integration are rarely depicted on television. The issue of busing

seems to become "interesting" only when there is trouble.¹⁶

Television can also turn politicians into "stars" overnight. Since television presents not the person but the *image* of the person, the viewer is left to decide whether or not the image is a truthful one.

Objectivity

News producers have a double responsibility: concerned with presenting the news objectively, they also have to put on a "good show" to attract large audiences for advertisers. Competition is keen. Most news programs are scheduled around the same time, and reporters get their information from the same sources (Associated Press or United Press International news services). The focus of appeal, therefore, has to be on the anchor people, together with the leading reporters and the visual coverage.

Anchor people

Anchor men and women are the stars of their own news show. They appear to be talking directly to the viewer. In reality, they are reading from a teleprompter attached to the camera. Occasionally, so as not to give the impression of a fixed stare, they cast a quick glance downward, pretending to read.¹⁷

Visual coverage

Television news also involves film footage, video segments, slides, photographs, charts and diagrams, as well as live interviews. The essential thing is to create a vital and visual transmission. This is why the 30 minutes of daily network news, reduced to 22 minutes by commercial interruptions and station announcements, are quick and entertaining.



The Channel 4 TV News Game (trademark) is provided to schools free of charge as a public service, by WNBC, Channel 4, of New York. Local and state questions in the game are drawn from Channel 4's early evening newscasts. National and international questions are drawn from NBC-TV's early evening newscasts.

Suggested activities

News reports (social studies)

On a given evening students watch news programs on different channels. (One group watches channel 2, another channel 11, etc.) They list the lead stories and feature stories. Did every station consider the same stories important? Why?

Set up news committees and have reporters locate local and school news. Students can set up their own newscasts.

Roving reporters can conduct man-in-the-corridor interviews using tape recorders.

Produce a "News of the Week" presentation which can be shown in assembly each week. Timing the report down to the minute will put a premium on brief, straightforward reporting.

Students can produce their own class news show keeping in mind the various parts of a TV news program:

1. station identification
2. background music
3. sound effects
4. date and time
5. visual designs
6. setting
7. anchor person
8. lead story
9. subordinate stories
10. commercial
11. sports
12. weather

Where to look for news

- mayor's office and city council
- city offices such as education, transit, environment, budget, etc.
- county commissioners or county board
- county manager and county offices such as health, highways, etc.
- police and fire departments
- city attorney
- city and/or county medical examiner
- district attorney
- county police
- highway patrol or state police
- school officials
- local zoo director (always has a feature story for film)
- city and county political leaders (Republican, Democrat, Conservative, Liberal and others)
- city courts and justice of the peace
- county courts and district court (if located in your community)
- ambulance services, funeral homes or hospitals
- civil rights groups
- civic organizations such as Lions, Rotary, Kiwanis, etc.
- fraternal organizations: Elks, Eagles, Shriners, Masons, Knights of Columbus
- weather bureau

Teaching Strategy Eight: *You Be the Critic*

Grades 5-9 (Language Arts)

Before you watch:

Choose a TV show. (It can be a show in a series, a special, or a sports event.) Plan to watch the show next time it is on. Read reviews of that show (as well as other TV shows) in your local newspaper or favorite magazine.

While you watch:

A good reviewer takes notes while watching a show. Be sure you have paper and pencil ready.

Look out for things that impress you about the show. For example, in the *Quincy, M.E.* series, you may be struck by Quincy's determination; by the way he rushes about getting angry at people; by his facial expressions; by his home on a boat.

Make note of time and place. Say *when* the action is taking place: *e.g.*, Is it at night or during the daylight hours? Is it in winter or summer? Is it happening in 1978, in the "olden" days or in the future? How do you know?

Say *where* the action is taking place: *e.g.*, is it in New York or in Hawaii? in the country or on some busy street corner? How can you tell? Be alert to hints of time and place.

Who are the people in the show? Note facial expressions, details of clothing, things they say and the setting in which they appear. Also note sound effects. For example: If you are writing about the show in which Quincy has a confrontation with a man whom he suspects of murder, mention the person's name; the stony look in his eyes, the twitch in his hand. Recall snippets of the conversation, in **addition** to the icy tone in the man's voice. Describe his elegant office with upholstered leather chairs, and note the monotonous hum of the air-conditioner.

Think of your feelings as you are watching the show: *e.g.*, scared, turned-off, excited, curious, intrigued. Jot down some words to describe how you feel. Also mention likes and dislikes. For example: I like the scene in which Quincy confronts the man whom he suspects of murder because it takes courage. At the same time, I think it is a foolish thing to do if one has so little evidence.

At the end of the show, look for the "credits." Jot down the names of the various actors and actresses so that you can refer to them in your review. (Remember, the actor is not the *character*; he only plays the *role* of a given character.)



"Billy's been made TV critic for the school newspaper."

After you watch:

After the show, while the impressions of the show are still fresh in your mind, start writing your review.

What was the show about? Write four sentences which explain what the show was all about. For example: The show was about a murder. Every-

one thought the dead woman had committed suicide. Quincy, the medical examiner, was suspicious. In the end, Quincy was able to prove that the woman was murdered by her husband.

What was the "thesis" or *main idea* of the show? Write a general statement. For example: Quincy is an excellent sleuth.

What do you think about the show? Support your point of view with reasons. For example, Quincy is an excellent sleuth *because*:

- he is very alert
- he is thorough
- he overlooks nothing
- he questions every little detail
- he takes nothing for granted
- he is committed to seeing that justice is done
- he is devoted to his job

Would you want to watch the show over again? Explain. Would you recommend the show to your friends? Would you want to see the next show in the series? Discuss.

Give your review a title, such as, "The Indomitable Quincy."

Making an Outline:

In order to know what you are going to say in each paragraph, you will need to make an out-

line. For example, in the first paragraph, you should mention:

- name of the show
- what it is about
- main idea or *thesis* – "Quincy Is An Excellent Sleuth."

In the second paragraph, you could support your thesis like this:

because: he questions every detail

examples: when he examined the body he found tiny scratches on the left arm; he asked the husband about them; something that the husband said made him suspicious; he decided to investigate the matter further

In the third paragraph you point out another supporting fact:

because: he is committed to seeing that justice is done

examples: he risked getting his boss angry rather than discontinue his investigation; he even risked losing his job.

In the last paragraph you are ready to express your opinion.

opinion: I like the show because Quincy is an interesting character. But I think he gets angry too often.

recommendation: I would like to see the show again, and I would want my friends to see it too.

General hints:

Be sure that you develop your "thesis" from paragraph to paragraph, bringing in reasons, examples, facts.

Avoid repetition. Once you have said something, try not to repeat it. Be as specific as you can. Mention names of people and places. Write about specific events, specific actions. Give precise descriptions. For example, don't just say that Quincy was suspicious. Say what he was suspicious about, and why, and what he did about it.

Try to avoid vague words (nice, pretty, interesting, large, people, things, different, special, lots of, kind of, etc.). If you think someone is good looking, talk about his "bright blue eyes" or his "warm, ready smile." If you think someone is smart, talk about her "quick wit, her alertness, her way of finding solutions to difficult problems."

Make a draft copy of your review. Read your draft and make the necessary corrections.

Remember that your opinions and your feelings are important, that every person is entitled to his or her own opinion.

Teaching Strategy Nine: *Camera Work*

Grades K-2 (Picture stories)

Objectives:

- to understand that every story has a beginning, a middle and an end
- to show how pictures in sequence can tell a story

Materials:

- drawing materials and glue
- cartoon characters (from old comic books) and other cutouts
- writing materials

Procedure:

1. Assign the children to watch a particular TV program.
2. Discuss: How do you feel about the program? What things did you like best?
3. Ask the students to tell "what happened," *i.e.*, First... Then... The next thing that happened was... Finally....
4. Ask the students to tell "what happened" by drawing pictures. Which pictures belong at the *beginning*, which in the *middle* and which at the *end*?

Enrichment:

From a pile of cutout cartoon characters and other cutouts, ask the children to pick out the ones they need to make up a story. They can glue them on a piece of paper to make a complete story, with a beginning, a middle, and an end. If necessary, balloons can be added.

Grades 3-4 (Fear and suspense)

Objective:

- to learn about dramatic effects

Materials:

- teaser portion of a TV script (or videotape, if available) of a suspenseful program
- props

Procedure:

1. Ask the students to read (or watch) the teaser portion of a TV program.
2. For discussion: How do you feel about this beginning? Does it make you want to read the rest of the script? Explain. Why do you think it is called a "teaser"?



Denenberg/OCDS

3. Discuss the dramatic effects involved; *e.g.*, types of camera shots, sound effects, lighting, scary objects, pace.

4. Ask the students to write an original teaser for a story or TV script using many dramatic effects. No more than one page long, it should begin with the words: "I opened the door..."

5. The students can act out their teasers, using props.

Assignment:

Finish the story.

Grades 5-6 (Telescripting)

Objectives:

- to understand that a TV program shows only the essential elements of the plot
- to write succinctly

Materials:

- drawing and writing materials

Procedure

1. Assign a specific fast-action TV show for home viewing.
2. Discuss the plot in terms of exposition, development, climax, and resolution. Also discuss how and why the action appeared fast. (For example, the idea of going downtown is translated thus: shot of man walking out of his house; second shot of man taking subway; third shot of man walking out of subway onto street with very tall buildings.)
3. Ask the students to write a short composition entitled "What I did yesterday."
4. Ask the students to reread their own compositions, answering the following questions:
 - a) Does it move quickly?
 - b) Is there anything in it that slows it down?
 - c) Is there anything in it that is not essential?
 - d) What events can I leave out?
 - e) What descriptions can I leave out?

- f) What details can I leave out?
- g) How can I make it more exciting?

5. Now ask the students to rewrite their compositions as a TV script. The paper should be divided in half as follows:

AUDIO	VIDEO
I woke up at 7:00 A.M.	picture of sun coming through window
Next thing I knew, I was on the school bus.	picture of yellow school bus

Camera shot list

- 1 *long shot of crowd scene*
- 2 *zoom in on one woman*
- 3 *close-up of her face in profile*
- 4 *frontal view of her face*
- 5 *medium shot of her walking*
- 6 *dissolve to different street*
- 7 *medium shot of two men*

Grades 7-9 (Playing TV director)

Objective:

- to think in terms of camera shots

Materials:

- short story or one-act play; sufficient copies for distribution
- writing materials

Procedure:

1. Students will read an assigned text.
2. Discuss what the people and the places in the text might look like, dress style, type of neighborhood, colors, lighting, weather, time of day, etc.
3. Discuss the use of flashback, filming time and space, camera shots, dramatic effects.
4. Divide the class into small groups to draw up a list of camera shots for the entire story.
5. Ask the group to script the story according to a camera shot list like the one below.

8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____

Teaching Strategy Ten: *News Broadcasting*

Grades K-2 (Telling what happened)

Objective:

- to communicate events and happenings

Materials:

- writing and drawing materials
- poster paper
- cassette tape recorder

Procedure:

1. Play a tape about a familiar piece of news ("Yesterday the First Grade saw a puppet show.")
2. Ask the students if they have some news to tell. Tape it and then play it back so that they can listen to themselves.
3. Now write out on the board some of the news items related by the students. Ask for volunteers to come up and write some news on the board.
4. Ask the students to make a fancy poster, using both drawings and words to tell some news.
5. Ask the students to act like TV News announcers by standing in front of their fancy poster to tell the news.

Assignment:

Go home and tell your family the news of what happened in school today. Come to school tomorrow ready to tell the news of what the family said.

Grades 3-4 (Columbus arrives)

Objective:

- to describe historical events as news items

Materials:

- newspaper article
- history text
- writing materials

Procedure:

1. Assign the class to watch a specific TV news segment on a topic of interest.
2. Discuss the news topic and its presentation on TV.
3. Now ask the class to read a passage describing an historical event. (e.g., Columbus' discovery of America; the arrival of the *Mayflower*).

4. Discuss how the historical account is different from the news bulletin. Which seems *closer* to us? Which seems *far away* and *long ago*? Explain.

5. Choose several historical events and ask the students to prepare TV news bulletins to tell the class. Pretend you are an Indian, for example, and you have just seen Columbus getting off his boat.



Grades 5-6 (Hot off the press)

Objectives:

- to relate and summarize significant news events orally
- to write a news story

Materials:

- a newspaper news story
- pencil and paper
- paste and scissors

Procedure:

1. Have the children select a news story from a newspaper, cut out and paste in notebook.
2. Underline the words that answer these questions:
 - Who is involved?
 - What happened?
 - Where did it happen?
 - Why did it happen?
 - When did it happen?
 - How did it happen?
3. Assign the children a news story on TV to listen and watch. Have the children apply the five W's and How of news writing.

4. As part of their current events program the students should be prepared to give a two-minute oral synopsis of the news item.

5. After hearing and reading examples of summarized items the children should be able to write and prepare an original news story.

Assignment

For a longer-term project, ask the students to watch one "story" on a magazine-format news program and then read a magazine article on the same subject. They may then compare what kinds of impressions and information they received from either medium.



Grades 7-9 (Presenting the news)

Objectives:

- to understand the difficulty involved in presenting a "true" and objective picture of an event.
- to understand the idea of bias

Materials:

- videotape of a dramatic news story, complete with anchor person and visuals

Procedure:

1. Show a videotape of a dramatic news story.
2. Have the students discuss the news story and its presentation in terms of:
 - voice modulation
 - things said
 - things not said
 - things seen
 - things not seen
3. Discuss how the same story could have been presented differently to show another side of the story.
4. Introduce the words "bias" and "objectivity." Have the students look up the definitions of the two words.
5. Ask each student to write a short report on "What happened in class yesterday"? Have the

students read their compositions aloud and discuss one another's viewpoints. (*i.e.*, How was what John saw different from what Mary saw? What did John mention?)

Alternative Procedure:

1. Ask your students to watch one of the news programs which feature a "magazine" format.
2. Give the students a checklist of items to watch for during their home viewing of the program:
 - use of music
 - fast cuts
 - selection of subject matter
 - eye-catching pictures
 - varieties of voiceovers
 - number of topics of stories covered
 - use of "teasers" to keep audience
 - use of advertising "hype"

Allow space on the report sheet for the student to make notes during his viewing of the program.

3. In class ask the students to compare their reports and decide which of the factors tended to "color" or "bias" the reporting.

Assignment:

Bring to class pictures or designs which seem to have a particular "bias" or "point of view."

Alternative Activities:

Using an historical event with which the students are familiar, have them select different roles and retell the event according to that party's viewpoint. For example, how would General Lee describe Appomattox to a TV news reporter? What would General Grant say?



The FCC is looking into the possibility of requiring sports announcers to be "objective and balanced." Have students collect instances in which they feel bias is shown or in which opinions are stated. Ask students to speculate on how commentaries might differ if sports announcers were required to be completely objective.

Footnotes: Chapter 3

- ¹Howard Luck Gossage, "You Can See Why the Mighty Would be Curious." *Coping with the Mass Media*, Joseph F. Littell, ed. (Evanston, Ill: McDougal, Littell and Co., 1976) p. 58
- ²Jeffrey Schrank, *TV Action Book*, (Evanston Ill.: McDougal, Littell and Co., 1974), p. 96.
- ³Edward Stasheff and Rudy Bretz, *The Television Program*, (New York: Hill & Wang, 1962), p. 33.
- ⁴Schrank, p. 65.
- ⁵Nicholas Johnson, "Public Broadcasting," *Coping with Television*, Joseph F. Littell, ed. p. 47.
- ⁶Robert Lewis Shayon, *The Crowd Catchers* (New York: Saturday Review Press, 1973), pp. 80-81.
- ⁷Nicholas Johnson, "How to Talk Back to Your TV Set," *Coping with the Mass Media*, J.F. Littell, ed., p. 58.
- ⁸Mankiewicz and Swerdlow, *Remote Control* (New York: Times Books, 1978) p. 218.
- ⁹Jeffrey Schrank, pp. 66-67.
- ¹⁰Mankiewicz and Swerdlow, pp. 222-223.
- ¹¹*Ibid.*, pp. 215-21.
- ¹²Mankiewicz and Swerdlow, p. 184.
- ¹³*Ibid.*, p. 90.
- ¹⁴Gerald Millerson, *The Techniques of Television Production* (Great Britain: Focal Press Ltd., 1970). p. 10
- ¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 220.
- ¹⁶Mankiewicz and Swerdlow, pp. 71-76, adapted.
- ¹⁷Robert Louis Shayon, pp. 87-89, adapted.

4. *Changing Ourselves, Changing Television*

Obviously, I'm not suggesting that you run out and buy up the nearest network. What I am suggesting is that we stop thinking that television programming somehow materializes out of thin air, or that it's manufactured by hidden forces or anonymous men. It is not.

Nicholas Johnson

TV manipulation

Does television really manipulate us? Daniel Boorstin, Librarian of Congress, maintains that it does:

We continue to talk about "regulating" television, though television already, perhaps irrevocably, regulates us . . . it regulates not only our opinions on almost everything, but also how, when, and what we eat; when we sleep; how we raise our children; what our children think of us; what we do or don't buy; what (and whether) we think of lawyers, doctors, policemen and lawbreakers; how we act in matters of sex and race; how we debate our national issues. Most important, television has transformed our perception of what problems (an unhappy marriage, an upset stomach, catching a bank-robber or a mugger, preserving a near-extinct animal species) are soluble and how easily these can be solved.¹

Topics for discussion:

- Can you name specific ways in which TV has shaped your lifestyle and your opinions?
- Take a specific event in recent history (the events in Iran, the Olympics, the Presidential election) and explain how TV has controlled your own emotional involvement.

Taking responsibility

Television *can* be a problem. But we can "speak up" whenever we find something objectionable about a TV program or commercial. In fact, we not only have legal rights to express our opinion in this area, we also have a responsibility to do so.

The Communications Act of 1934 (see p. 109) was expressly designed to stress consideration of the needs of the public in broadcasting deci-

sions. TV stations must be operated "in the public interest, convenience and necessity." To encourage local involvement in the proceedings of the Federal Communications Commission (see pp. 94–99), Congress amended the Communications Act to require local public notice of the filings of broadcast applications and the designations of hearings on such applications.²

What does this mean for us? It means that every three years licenses for station owners come up for renewal and we can influence the granting or the denial of these license renewal applications with our "vote."

Action for Children's Television

Most people are unaware of their power to influence broadcasting decisions. Yet activism on the part of responsible viewers has led to significant changes in the quality of TV programs and commercials. The American Medical Association (AMA) and the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) have exerted nationwide pressure to reduce the violent content of TV programs. Local organizations like the Lansing (Michigan) Committee for Children's Television have even persuaded local stations to drop gory shows from their late afternoon schedules. But the most significant reforms to date have been achieved by Action for Children's Television (ACT), based in Newtonville, Massachusetts.³



New York Times

Children's commercials

In March of 1973, testifying before the Senate Select Committee on Nutrition and Human Needs in Washington, D.C., ACT presented its case against TV ads for children:

A medium which could be a powerful educational tool to inform the American public of good health and nutrition is instead a vehicle for falsehood, misinformation and misleading persuasion. TV advertising presents several dangers to the health of children — the most significant are dental caries, the exclusion of most nutritious foods from the diet, obesity, and other health problems which arise in adulthood as a result of a taste for sweets acquired during childhood.⁴

Largely in response to ACT and the threat of regulatory action, children's commercials *have* improved in the past few years. Program hosts are no longer delivering commercial pitches; vitamins are no longer peddled to children on television. Occasional public service messages during Saturday morning cartoons now tell children to "have a carrot" or eat a good breakfast. In addition, commercials' time on children's weekend shows has been reduced from sixteen to nine and a half minutes an hour.⁵

It is ACT's goal, however, to rid "kidvid" of all advertising. "We feel it is wise to separate children from the marketplace until they are ready to deal with it," explains Peggy Charren, President of ACT.

The battle over TV ads for children is in process. On February 24, 1978, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) made a formal recommendation to consider banning all TV advertising directed to an audience of very young children on the grounds that they are not mature enough to understand the selling purpose of commercials.

Economics of children's programming

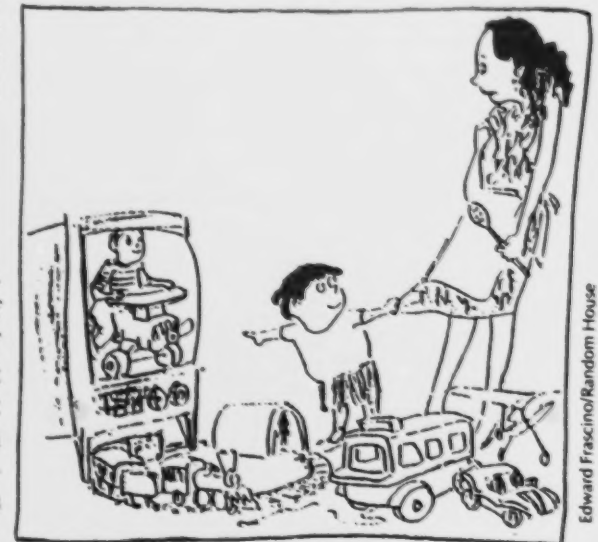
ACT was formed in 1968 by a group of activist mothers concerned about the excessive violence on children's TV programs. It soon became clear that the issue of violence had to be dealt with by tackling the question of the economics of children's programming. Violence was understood as an inevitable consequence of the commercial broadcasting system. As one script writer put it:

We aren't going to get rid of violence until we get rid of advertisers. The advertisers want something with which to get the audience. Violence equals excitement equals ratings.⁶

ACT concluded that the way to reduce TV violence was to take children's programming out of the ratings system.⁷ At the same time, ACT maintained that children's television should not be used by broadcasters to make a profit. It should be a public service funded through foundations, institutional advertising by corporations and underwriting by major companies and institutions.⁸

Topics for discussion:

- What kinds of products are advertised on Saturday mornings?
- Think of a product you or your family bought because you saw it advertised on TV. Were you pleased or disappointed?



Edward Frascino/Random House

Children's programs

The idea of TV programs designed to benefit children is a relatively new one. When Joan Ganz Cooney, President of Children's Television Workshop (CTW), first presented her idea of educational programming for preschoolers to the networks, it was turned down. Ms. Cooney then turned to public television, and in 1968 *Sesame Street* began.

Since then the networks have improved their programming for children as a direct result of parental and political pressure, as well as competition from CTW. ABC's *Afterschool Specials*, a series of children's dramas, deal with sensitive issues like alcoholism ("Francesca Baby"), divorce ("Me and Dad's New Wife"), and childbirth ("My Mom's Having a Baby"). NBC's *Special Treat* features dramatizations of children's novels ("Big Henry and the Polka Dot Kid") and documentaries on various topics. NBC also organizes parent participation workshops for parents and children to discuss their reactions to TV programs. CBS, on the other hand, runs a preschool program, *Captain Kangaroo*, and broadcasts its *Festival of the Lively Arts for Young People* six times a year.⁹

Resources:

Action for Children's Television, 46 Austin Street, Newtonville, Mass. 02160 (617-527-7870). National organization of parents and professionals, working to upgrade television for children and to eliminate commercialism from children's TV.



The following chart represents the consensus of the experts on *TV Guide's* panel. Each program was rated on a scale of zero to ten, or abominable to marvelous, for its entertainment values and then for its educational and social values. The overall rating in the final column includes those ratings but is not an average of them.

Table 11: The experts rate the best and worst shows*

Program	Entertainment Values	Educational and/or Social Values	Overall
1. The CBS Festival of Lively Arts for Young People	7	9.2	8.7
2. ABC Afterschool Specials	8.5	8.8	8.6
3. Special Treat (NBC)	8.4	8.7	8.5
4. Mister Rogers' Neighborhood (PBS)	7.3	8.7	8.1
5. The CBS Afternoon Playhouse	8	8	8
6. The CBS Library	8.7	8.1	8
7. Sesame Street (PBS)	7.8	7.5	7.7
8. Captain Kangaroo (CBS)	7.1	7.1	7.5
9. Villa Alegre (PBS)	6.2	7.4	7.4
10. 3-2-1 Contact (PBS)	5.9	7.6	7.2
11. The Electric Company (PBS)	6.5	7	6.7
12. Disney's Wonderful World (NBC)	8	4.9	6.6
13. Razzmatazz (CBS)	5.5	3.7	4.2

*Adapted from Claire Safran. "Children's Television: What are the Best and Worst Shows?," a two-part series. *TV Guide*, Aug. 9, 1980.

The cost of producing such programs is high. (ABC pays \$175,000 for a 60 minute children's special scheduled for only two runs.) Consequently, the networks and the local stations prefer to run soap operas, old movies, cartoons, adult series and game shows in the late afternoon and early evening. Parents still have to be careful about what TV programs their children are watching. For mothers and fathers, there is this advice from the Parenting Project: "Most children at some time will watch shows that we don't approve of. The most important thing is not to forbid shows, but to know their content and to take time to discuss our views with our children."

In other words, there is a need for program choices for children, regardless of ratings.¹⁰

Resources:

Claire Safran. "Children's Television: What Are the Best and Worst Shows?" a two-part Series. *TV Guide*, August 9 and 16, 1980.

Waters, Harry F., et al. "Children's TV: Growing Up?" *Newsweek*, March 31, 1980.

TV Program Review Guide. (Summarizes PTA monitors' reviews of prime-time TV programs; lists the ten "best," ten "worst," ten "most violent" and ten "least violent" programs.) 36 pp. 50 cents; 3 copies for \$1.00. Available from The National PTA, 700 North Rush Street, Chicago, Ill. 60611.

What parents and teachers can do

Ultimately, because they depend on you as a potential consumer, broadcasters, advertisers and manufacturers are interested in giving you what you want.

Write letters. You can write to your local station, the networks, the sponsor, as well as the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) in Washington. You can also write letters to your congressman and to the press.

In your complaint, state your name, the station call letters and your specific complaint and suggestion. If possible, relate this to an FCC standard (see pp. 95-99), and ask for a specific remedy. Also be sure to write letters of praise whenever you think praise is due.

Sending out copies of your original letter is a good idea. When you write to a local station or to a sponsor, be sure to send a copy to the network with which the station is affiliated, as well as to the FCC (or the FTC), which keeps a file on every licensed station. To make sure that your letter doesn't get ignored, call up or follow through on it.¹¹

Bringing about change

The FCC is the agency of the federal government responsible for regulating broadcasting. The FCC sets down the guidelines, rules and regulations with which broadcasters must comply. Practically speaking, it is the broadcasters, rather than the public, who have ready



Roy Doty Macmillan



Edward Frascino/Random House

access to the FCC because they usually have a lawyer in Washington, and sometimes a lobbyist, to represent their interests.¹²

Because the broadcasters have such easy access to the FCC and because the FCC was never originally set up to control the content of the airways, parents and educators have in the past counted little on the federal agency for support. However, recently the FCC has been considering a proposal to require each station to carry seven and a half hours per week of instructional programming for children under twelve. Admittedly, the FCC sees such a measure as a short-term solution; high quality programming must come from the television studios, not from a legislative body.

Nor can parents and teachers blame the networks entirely for the intellectual junk food our children are consuming. According to ABC vice president Squire Rushnell, "The dilemma of children's TV is that the kids watch it but the parents do all the complaining. If a show looks like another day of school, they just won't sit there."

Improving the quality of children's television fare is a challenge for educators, parents, broadcasters and regulatory agencies alike. This is why it is difficult to bring about change alone. To improve the programming service of your local station, you are best off joining student groups, civic clubs, unions, PTA's, the League of Women Voters, among other organizations.¹³

Be sure to familiarize yourself with the organizations that you are trying to reform. You can do this by monitoring broadcasts; setting up citizens' TV councils to issue reports on broadcasters' performances; writing for literature on broadcasting rights; contacting national organizations; sending delegations to visit local managers and owners of TV stations. You can even take legal steps with the FCC.¹⁴

Any effort to bring about a change in broadcasting in such a way that it reflects your interest and viewpoints must:

- have a clearly focused objective, limited in scope
- be carefully planned so that you know what to expect
- be reasonable in demanding changes
- be properly researched and backed up with facts
- be legal
- be **representative** of the community, not the individual¹⁵

Topics for discussion:

What immediate complaints do you and your friends have regarding TV?

How can you voice this complaint?

Do you have any suggestions for change?

Do you have any praise you would like to voice?

What group(s) would you align yourself with in your efforts to bring a change?

Rating a station's performance

A group of Washington, D.C. students, under the supervision of the Institute of Policy Studies, undertook a systematic review of the license applications of all TV stations in the area of Washington, D.C., Virginia, West Virginia and Maryland. "Performance sheets" were used to evaluate and rank stations in amounts of news broadcast, employees hired, commercials, public service announcements and other factors.¹⁶ The result was a book that may become a working model for the comparative evaluation of the performances of TV stations (see *Resources*).

Resources:

Marsha O'Bannon Prowitt, *Guide to Citizen Action in Radio and Television*, Office of Communication, United Church of Christ, 1971.

Donald K. Ross, *A Public Citizen's Action Manual*, (Introduction by Ralph Nader). New York: Grossman, 1973.

Television Today: The End of Communication and the Death of Community. Institute for Policy Studies, 1540 New Hampshire Ave., Washington, D.C.

Robert Louis Shayon, *Partners in Interest: A Citizen's Guide to Improving Television and Radio*. New York Office of Communications, United Church of Christ, 1974.

Creative ventures

Complaining to the FCC about existing conditions is not the only way to bring about changes in broadcasting. Educators are beginning to join with media producers to plan innovations in programming.

For example, the Philadelphia Board of Education, following the success of the Philadelphia TV Reading Program (p. 14) and its newly found power to guarantee audiences for quality programs, is beginning to have a role of influence in television programming. All three networks have been submitting scripts to Drs. Marcuse and McAndrew, who will have input regarding content in 25 percent of all specials aired this year.

The industry itself has shown some signs of conscience in the matter of children's programming. Some of the networks have been interweaving information spots — ranging from 30 seconds to five minutes. *In the News* is a CBS idea which offers current events in the measured authoritative voice of a commentator. CBS has also initiated a series of dramatizations of children's books intended to encourage reading. ABC, which uses an elastic format for *Schoolhouse Rock*, a smorgasboard of useful information, is also presenting *ABC Weekend Special*, the first regular dramatic series to be shown on Saturday mornings.

Some of the commercial broadcast groups such as Westinghouse's Group W, Jerry Communications and the Post-Newsweek stations have been encouraging good local kid-fare as well as syndicating some fine material produced for children in foreign countries.

Boycotting sponsors

The newly formed Coalition for Better Television, parented by Rev. Ferry Falwell's Moral Majority and Don Wildman's National Federation for Decency is pursuing a more radical method — an organized boycott of products which sponsor programs considered sexually offensive. Peggy Charren, co-founder of ACT, disapproves of this boycott method: "... this kind of approach limits options, reduces the whole scope of television programming. Its thrust is purely negative."



"I can watch as much crime and violence as I like as long as they all keep their clothes on."

Useful addresses

Government Agencies

Director, Consumer Product Information Center, Public Documents Distribution Center, Pueblo, Colorado 81009

Chairman, Consumer Product Safety Commission, 1750 K St., N.W., Washington, D.C.

Chairman, Federal Communications Commission, Washington, D.C. 20554

Chairman, Federal Trade Commission, Bureau of Consumer Protection, Washington, D.C., 20580

Director, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Welfare, 303 Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C.

Director, Office of Telecommunications Policy, Executive Office of the President, Washington, D.C. 20504

Station Groups

Some major groups owning TV stations are listed below. Address your letters to the president.

Avco Broadcasting Corp., 1600 Provident Tower, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

Capital Cities Broadcasting Corp., 24 E. 51 St., New York, N.Y. 10022

Cox Broadcasting Stations, 1602 W. Peachtree St. N.E., Atlanta, Ga. 30309

John E. Fetzer Stations, 590 W. Maple St., Kalamazoo, Mich. 49001

Forward Communications Inc., Box 1088, 1114 Grand Ave., Wausau, Wis. 54401

Hearst Stations, 959 Eighth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10019

Kaiser Broadcasting Stations, 300 Lakeside Drive, Kaiser Bldg., Oakland, Calif. 94604

Metromedia Inc., 277 Park Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017

Post-Newsweek, Broadway House, Washington, D.C., 20016

RKO General Inc., 1440 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10018

Scripps-Howard Group, 200 Park Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017

Storer Broadcasting Co., 1177 Kane Concourse, Miami Beach, Fla. 33154

Taft Broadcasting Co., 1906 Highland Ave., Cincinnati, Ohio 45219

Tribune Co. (Chicago Tribune) Stations, 2501 Bradley Place, Chicago, Ill. 60618

Westinghouse Broadcasting Stations, 90 Park Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016

(Complete information available from Broadcasting Yearbook, 1735 DeSales Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036)

Networks

Address your letters to the presidents of these companies.

ABC, 1330 Avenue of the Americas, New York, N.Y. 10019 (212-LT1-7777)

CBS, 51 West 52 St., New York, N.Y. 10019 (212-765-4321)

NBC, 50 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, N.Y. 10020 (212-CI7-8300)

PBS, 485 L'Enfant Plaza S.W., Washington, D.C. (202-48-5000)

Local Stations

Every local TV station has a call sign beginning with "W" east of the Mississippi and with "K" west of the Mississippi. To find the addresses and phone numbers of your local stations, look up the call-signs in the phone book under "W" or "K" (WNEW, KRON, etc.). Address your letters to the president of the station.

Organizations and Groups

Action for Children's Television, 46 Austin Street, Newtonville, Mass. 02160 (617-527-7870). National organization of parents and professionals, working to upgrade television for children and to eliminate commercialism from children's TV. Membership, newsletter, campaigns, research information, film, and library facilities.

Center for the Study of Responsive Law, P.O. Box 19367, Washington, D.C. 20036. Nader founded this group of lawyers who investigate a variety of areas in response to consumer needs. Provides legal advice, publishes books on areas studied.

Citizens Communications Center, 1812 N Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. Provides legal assistance and advice to citizens interested in taking action in broadcasting area. Publishes annual report.

Council on Children, Media, and Merchandising, 1346 Connecticut Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. The Council, created by Robert Choate, is active in areas relating to nutrition and food advertising to children.

National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, 54 W. 40 St., New York, N.Y. 10018. Professional organization of broadcast producers and performers. Publishes some materials.

National Association for Better Broadcasting, P.O. Box 130, Topanga, Calif. 90290. Oldest broadcasting organization. Has membership, publishes newsletter and annual critique of programs on the air.

National Association for the Education of Young Children, Media Committee, 1834 Connecticut Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009. Leading organization for teachers of preschool children? publishes journal and has special committee preparing materials about the media.

National Citizens Committee for Broadcasting, 1914 Sunderland Place N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. Was active in 1960s, then lapsed. Now revitalizing as a national organization planning to coordinate all citizen efforts in broadcasting.

Office of Communication, United Church of Christ, 289 Park Ave. S., New York, N.Y. 10010. Dr. Everett Parker has made the Office of Communication a spearhead of legal efforts to improve minority representation in broadcasting. Publishes some materials, gives advice.

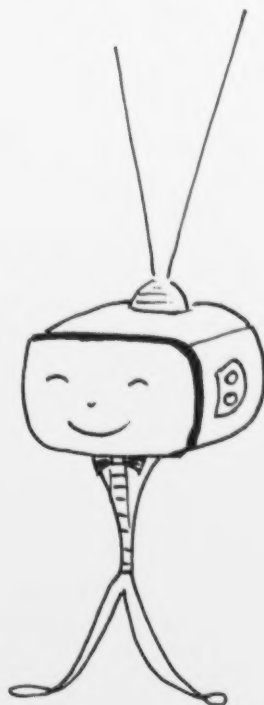
Urban Communication Group, 1730 M Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. A group involved in minority ownership in broadcasting, especially cable TV.

Public Interest Law Firms

Citizens Communications Center (Citizens), 1914 Sunderland Place, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036, Telephone: (202) 296-4238. Citizens represents groups wishing to exercise their legal rights in the regulation of broadcasting. Many groups have been counseled by citizens on how to negotiate with broadcasters for improved programming, access to air time, and minority hiring. Lawyers from Citizens help groups to work out agreements with local broadcasters and, where necessary, challenge renewal of a broadcast license.

Media Access Project (MAP), 1910 N Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036, Telephone: (202) 785-2613. MAP is primarily concerned with the enforcement of citizens' rights under the fairness doctrine and the personal-attack, political-editorial, and equal-time rules. The organization publishes a booklet for political candidates, the Broadcast Media Guide for Candidates.

Public Communication, Inc. (PCI), c/o Tracy Westen, 1910 Parnell Avenue, Los Angeles, Calif. 90405, Telephone: (213) 475-5981. PCI engages in a wide range of litigation aimed at decreasing censorship in radio and television and increasing opportunities for individual self-expression. Many of PCI's cases arise under the First Amendment and the fairness doctrine.



FCC standards for programming and performance

The FCC has recognized that there are types and areas of service which are essential to meet community needs and interests in broadcasting. The standards or guidelines set forth here were adopted by the FCC as criteria for evaluating broadcast service *"in the public interest."* We will explore seven of the most important standards in programming, advertising and employment which concern you and which have been bases for action by public groups.

Requirements for Public Participation in Program Planning

When a broadcaster plans what programs his station will produce or carry each year, he is committed, by FCC rules, to involve the public . . . his audience . . . in what is known as *"contributive planning."* In explaining this responsibility, the FCC charged each licensee with *"finding his own path (for programming) with the guidance of those whom his signal is to serve."*

To discover this *"path"* the Commission proposed that broadcasters begin by:

"first, a canvass of the listening public . . . and

"second, consultation with leaders in community life."

These consultations should include both leaders of community organizations and members of the general public. The prime criterion for these conferences is that the community leaders consulted must represent a **true cross-section** of the community, not just one or two majority interests.

In conducting his consultations and public canvass, the broadcaster must follow the guidelines contained in the FCC's *Primer on Ascertainment of Community Problems by Broadcast Licensees*. You may request a free copy from the FCC.

Periodically, the broadcasters must report to the FCC on these consultations, detailing with whom they have talked, what problems were

identified, and what programming is planned to meet these community needs. The broadcaster must include very specific information on these consultations and programming promises in Section IV of his license renewal application. (See Appendix E.)

If you look at the information included in Section Four of the license renewal form for stations in your community, and examine the additional exhibits the broadcaster has attached to his application to support his claims, you can find out:

- If the broadcaster's list of community leaders and local citizens include leaders from the organizations and interests you support in your community.
- If all the major interest groups in your community have been consulted in depth.
- If the consultations reflect the broad spectrum of the community, including minority groups, young people, the poor, and people representing children's interest.
- If the needs and interests set out by the broadcaster cover what you consider to be the real needs and interests of your community.
- If the programs shown or heard in the past and those being planned by the broadcaster are responsive to these needs and interests.

FCC Policy on Programming

The programming a broadcaster does has always been a primary indicator of his service to his public—and his right to hold a license. The FCC's basic programming policy statement identifies 14 categories of programming that a station should carry as *"the major elements usually necessary to meet the public interest, needs, and desires of the community in which the station is located."* These categories are:

1. Opportunity for local expression
2. Development and use of local talent
3. Programs for children
4. Religious programs
5. Educational programs

6. Public Affairs programs
7. Editorialization by licensees
8. Political broadcasts
9. Agricultural programs
10. News programs
11. Weather and market reports
12. Sports programs
13. Service to minority groups
14. Entertainment programs

While the FCC does not require a broadcaster to offer a particular percentage of programming in any of these categories, the Commission has stated that a station must offer a balanced program schedule that meets the needs and interests of **all** substantial groups in his audience. These program categories can be helpful to you in assessing whether broadcasters in your community are providing a "balanced" program diet for their listeners.

The difference between what the station is actually doing and what the FCC says it **should** be doing can provide you with a valuable yardstick on broadcaster performance in your area.

One point that the FCC and the courts have made time and time again is that the profitability (or lack of it) in carrying certain types of programming bears little relation to the broadcaster's obligation to provide it to this audience. Obviously, under the current system of free enterprise in broadcasting no official or unofficial body can or would issue rulings that would drive a broadcaster to bankruptcy. But stations cannot deny public service programming strictly on the basis that it cannot find sponsors to handle its cost. It is inherent in the public responsibility sections of their license that public service programming must be part of their program schedules, whether it is sponsored or not. Economically, at that point, it is not a question of the stations losing money. It is simply a problem of their not squeezing the maximum amount of profit out of the broadcast day.

In the important *Red Lion* case in 1969, the U.S. Supreme Court stated that "*it is the right of the public to receive suitable access to social, po-*

litical, esthetic, moral and other ideas and experience . . . in programming". And the fulfillment of that broadcaster responsibility is on the record for you to see. Station license renewal forms must specifically include:

- lists of proposed programs designed to respond to community needs and interests,
- lists of past programs broadcast to fulfill community needs and interests,
- news staff and program time for local and regional news,
- past and proposed program formats,
- an evaluation of station contribution to overall diversity of program services available in your community,
- number of public service announcements broadcast weekly,
- network affiliation,
- time and percentage of programming in news, public affairs, and "other" programming (excluding entertainment and sports).

The "Fairness" Standard in Broadcasting

The presentation of news and public affairs programming is probably the single most important public service a radio or television station can render to its community. A broadcaster has special and continuing responsibility for fairness in this area; fairness in the handling of controversial issues of public importance, fairness in the handling of people running for public office. Over the years, the rules governing his actions in this sensitive area have become known as "The Fairness Doctrine."

To meet his obligations, the broadcaster has to fulfill two basic requirements:

First, he must broadcast discussions of issues of great public concern;

Second, he must assure overall fairness in that discussion by giving fair coverage to each substantial viewpoint on an issue.

Furthermore, broadcasters must program to meet their fairness obligations at their own expense if paid sponsorship is unavailable and must seek out spokesmen of contrasting views if none volunteer.

The fairness requirement in broadcasting is one of our most precious public rights. It is intended to promote debate of public issues and to force broadcasters into using their stations as forums for the exchange of ideas and views. A broadcaster is not fulfilling his responsibility if he presents only bland and non-controversial programming or if he monopolizes the programming with only one side, or his view, of an important issue.

Some of the issues that have been considered as "controversial issues of public importance" by the FCC are civil rights, labor disputes, health food fads, pay TV and CATV, school desegregation, and U.S. foreign aid. These are national issues generally, although with local application. But important local issues fall under the doctrine as well. The rule-of-thumb criteria for local Fairness Doctrine application may be interpreted as issues that affect a major part of the community and that have elements of the community on different sides of the question.

Once again, the Supreme Court recently backed the public in this broadcast issue. The Court rejected arguments by broadcasters that the Fairness Doctrine discouraged the programming of controversial matters and interfered with freedom of speech because the Doctrine required stations to provide time for all sides to speak. In its opinion, the Supreme Court said:

"It does not violate the First Amendment to treat licensees given the privilege of using scarce radio frequencies as proxies for the entire community, obligated to give suitable time and attention to matters of great public concern. To condition the granting or renewal of licenses on a willingness to present representative community views on controversial issues is consistent with the ends and purposes of those constitutional provisions forbidding the abridgement of freedom of speech and freedom of the press."

Supreme Court
Red Lion, 1969

Keep in mind that a reasonable opportunity for all sides to discuss conflicting views does not require that equal time be given for each argument. Overall station programming and not a single program or program series is the test for compliance with fairness. The broadcaster has considerable discretion as to the technique, format or spokesman he may choose to comply with the ruling.

Several individuals and citizen groups have tried to get the FCC to apply the requirements of the Fairness Doctrine to commercials that present one viewpoint on controversial issues of public importance, such as pollution and drug usage. With the exception of cigarette commercials (which were later outlawed by act of Congress), the Commission has ruled that the Fairness Doctrine is not applicable to product advertising—even when the claims made relate to a matter of public concern. The Commission has announced an inquiry of the Fairness Doctrine which includes this issue.

News Coverage

Impartiality, factual reporting, and freedom from bias are the mainstays of news coverage. They are the first commandments of any news operation. But, as in any other part of broadcasting, sometimes the commandments are broken. And here is where observing the Fairness Doctrine is most important and the enforcement most difficult.

The FCC has made it clear that it will not attempt to substitute its own judgment of news values for that of a licensee. But deliberate distortion, slanting or "staging" of news by broadcast stations is the worst possible betrayal of the public interest and the Commission has stated that where it can be proven, it will take remedial action.

Personal Attack Provision of the Fairness Doctrine

In addition to the issue-covering provisions of "Fairness," there is also a section covering personal attack. If in the course of a discussion of a controversial issue, an attack is made upon the honesty, integrity or character of a person or group, the broadcaster must send the person or group attacked (1) a notice of the attack, (2) a tape, transcript, or accurate summary of the attack, (3) an offer of reasonable opportunity to respond, free of charge.

Exemptions to this rule are personal attacks made upon foreign persons or groups, attacks by political candidates or their spokesmen upon each other, or attacks made during bona fide newscasts or coverage of bona fide news events.

Equal Time for Political Candidates

There are special provisions in the Fairness Doctrine which apply only to legally-qualified candidates for public office. If a broadcaster grants station time to one candidate, either free or for payment for time, he must offer other candidates for the same office a similar opportunity to use his station under the same free or payment terms.

Equal Employment Standards

The FCC recently adopted sweeping new rules that require all commercial and noncommercial stations to establish programs designed to eliminate discrimination in station employment.

The rules charge the stations with developing *"positive recruitment, training, job design and other measures in order to insure genuine equality of opportunity to participate fully in all organizational units, occupations and levels of responsibility in the station."*

The Commission further stated specific practices each station must follow in recruitment, selection, training, placement, promotion, pay, working conditions, demotion, layoff and termination. They also suggested that broadcasters *"might consider the adoption of special training programs for qualifiable minority group members, (and) cooperative action with other organizations to improve employment opportunities and community conditions that affect employability. . . ."*

Stations must report regularly to the FCC on their progress in implementing these new rules. An annual report must be submitted by May 31 detailing statistics on station employment of Blacks, Orientals, American Indians, Spanish-surnamed Americans and women. In addition, at license renewal time, broadcasters must henceforth report in a new Section VI of their application the specific practices they are following to secure equal employment at all levels in their station. (The only exceptions to this new reporting are stations with less than five employees.)

Commercials and Advertising

Commercial radio and television is an advertiser-supported medium. The money derived by the station selling time to advertisers provides broadcasters with the funds to buy and produce programs and, of course, with their profits. The only product prohibited from advertising on radio and TV is cigarettes.

The FCC long ago accepted advertising as necessary to the economic support of broadcast operations, but has warned broadcasters that they must not let commercial interests drive out their public interest responsibilities. Nevertheless, it will take extraordinary efforts by the public to insure that the programming needs of the public always take priority over the commercial interests of advertisers and broadcasters.

Broadcaster Responsibility for Advertising Material

The FCC has stated flatly that stations must assume responsibility for all programming—including commercials—that they broadcast. In its programming policy statement of 1960, the Commission said:

"With respect to advertising material, the licensee has the additional responsibility to take all reasonable measures to eliminate any false, misleading or deceptive matter and to avoid abuses with respect to the total amount of time devoted to advertising continuity as well as the frequency with which regular programs are interrupted for advertising messages."

To underscore their point, the FCC added that responsibility for all these commercial criteria *"is personal to the licensee and may not be delegated."* The FCC **does** consider advertising an important public interest function of the station, so you can also use it as one of the criteria by which you evaluate a station's performance in your community.

The FCC cannot regulate commercials for taste or propriety. Those are matters of editorial judgment and not within the Commission's province. That is not to say you as citizens cannot protest to your station about these things. But your power is that of a customer protesting how you're being treated by a salesman, not as a citizen backed by law.

In reality, the FCC has set few enforceable standards relating to broadcast advertising. The following sections will give you its position in three areas most sensitive to the public.

Amount and Frequency of Advertising

Commercial time is generally measured in total minutes per hour rather than by number of announcements. If a station devotes 15 minutes an hour to commercial "spot" announcements, it can put on 15 one-minute announcements, or 30 half-minute announcements, or a mind-boggling 90 10-second announcements . . . or any mix of these three methods.

While the FCC has statutory power to limit commercial matter in programs, it has never set specific standards for broadcasters. In effect, the FCC does not question radio broadcasters who propose 18 minutes per hour or television broadcasters who propose 16 minutes per hour. Even some broadcasters have complained about the overcommercialization of television and radio programming by some stations and have urged the Commission to do something about it. As of now, they haven't.

Information on commercial practices by broadcasters is required in their license renewal form. Each applicant must state how many minutes per hour he devoted to commercials in the past license period and what amount of commercial time he plans to make available during the next three year license period. If a broadcaster exceeds this stated commercial time, this raises questions about his performance in the public interest. You can determine whether a station has lived up to its promises by comparing the performance reported in its most recent license renewal application with the promises made three years ago.

False and Misleading Advertising

A broadcast licensee has a special responsibility assigned to him by the FCC to protect the public from false, misleading and deceptive advertising in his broadcast schedule. The Commission has stated that this duty is *"an important ingredient in his operation in the public interest."*

Both the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) have responsibility for identifying and investigating complaints about false, misleading and deceptive claims in advertising. Radio and television broadcasters receive information of product misrepresentation in advertising directly from these federal agencies and through articles in broadcast and advertising journals.

It is the broadcaster, not the sponsor and manufacturer, whom the public can hold directly responsible for carrying advertising identified by responsible sources as false, misleading or deceptive. It is the broadcaster who has pledged to put the public interest above all else. And yet today, on hundreds of radio and television stations throughout the nation, advertisements identified as false, misleading and deceptive after investigation by federal agencies are being broadcast regularly to hundreds of thousands of listeners and viewers. The FCC gives no indication that it intends to fulfill its own obligation to the public without being forced to a decision by citizen complaints.

Teaching Strategy Eleven: *Government Regulation of TV*

Grades 3-5 (Federal regulation)

Objective:

- to understand the need for regulation of television

Materials:

- FCC Standards
- chalkboard eraser
- wastebasket

Procedure:

1. Tell the students they are going to play the "Eraser" game. Hand the eraser to one student and tell him to start. What will emerge usually is either chaos, or the student will make up a set of rules.

2. Whatever set of rules emerges, the teacher acts as recorder and arbiter, delineating them on the chalkboard.

3. Elicit from class the fact that rules are necessary for games and business. Without them there would be chaos and nobody would win.

4. Make a list of real-life situations where rules are crucial:

automobile traffic
airplane traffic

Explain that sound and pictures are transmitted through the air, thus creating "sonic highways."

Activities:

1. Show students picture on p. 101 of Statue of Liberty surrounded by television antennas. Ask students to write a paragraph about what the picture says to them.

2. Distribute a list of the 14 categories of programming which the F.C.C. deems "necessary to meet the public interest." (See pp. 95-96). Explain any difficult vocabulary items in the list. Ask students to choose those categories in which they watch programs. Write the name of at least one program next to each of those categories. More likely, the students will have no entry next to half of the categories. Go over each of the "no entry" items to understand who *would* be interested (for example, shut-ins for religious programs, farmers for agricultural programs, voters for political broadcasts).

Grades 7-9 (Federal regulation)

Objective:

- to perceive the need for regulation of television

Materials:

- FCC Standards (pp. 95-99)

Procedure:

1. Have the students read the FCC Standards.

2. How is TV broadcasting regulated by the Federal government? Have the students describe the function of the FCC.

3. What are the criteria for license renewal? Have the students list the criteria.

4. Ask the students to explain the "Fairness Doctrine" in broadcasting.

5. Create a group dynamic situation: an FCC Hearing. Divide the class into groups: one playing the FCC Commissioners; another, the representatives and lawyers of an existent television station; and the third, constituting a group challenging either the relicensing of the group presently controlling the station, or challenging an action of a station. Allow each group to familiarize itself with FCC regulations and previous rulings. Then move each group to consider a particular situation and develop the role of the party which each group is assuming. Hearings and a judgment could then take place in exciting fashion. During the proceedings within the groups, before the actual presentations, the role of the teacher can be that of a resource person and a facilitator.



You need special rules for kids, like special traffic laws in front of a school. The industry would do nothing without a regulatory threat.

*Peggy Charren
President
Action for Children's Television*

Footnotes, Chapter 4

¹Daniel Boorstin, "The Great Electronic Dictator" (a book review of *Remote Control*), *New York Times Book Review*, February 19, 1978.

²Sydney Head, *Broadcasting in America* (New York: Houghton Mifflin and Company, 1972), pp. 375-376.

³"What TV is Doing to Kids," *Newsweek*, February 21, 1977.

⁴Evelyn Kaye, *The Family Guide to Children's Television* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1974), p. 76.

⁵Richard Zoglin, "The Coming Battle Over TV Ads for Kids," *New York Times*, January 8, 1978.

⁶Citation in Evelyn Kaye, p. 65, from a study for the Surgeon General's Report.

⁷Evelyn Kaye, p. 65.

⁸*Ibid.*, p. 89.

⁹Evelyn Kaye, *How to Treat TV with T.L.C.* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1979), p. 38.

¹⁰Evelyn Kaye, *The Family Guide to Children's Television*, p. 42.

¹¹*Ibid.*, pp. 114-115.

¹²*Ibid.*, pp. 66-67.

¹³*Ibid.*, p. 121.

¹⁴Nicholas Johnson, "What Do We Do About Television?" *Coping with Television*, J.F. Littell, ed. p. 209

¹⁵Evelyn Kaye, *The Family Guide to Children's Television*, p. 125.

¹⁶Nicholas Johnson, p. 210.

Appendix A. How TV Grew

It is possible to maintain that modern communication has made the world state inevitable

—Norbert Weiner

The TV environment

"Man is no more conscious of communication than a fish is conscious of the waters in which it swims," Senator S.I. Hayakawa has said. Indeed, we extend ourselves, our perceptions, and consequently our environment — through communication. Yet we are rarely aware of the overall effect.

Because of television, radio and telephone we live in a world where practically everyone — even the man on the moon — can be reached almost instantly. But somehow the magic of it seems to escape us. For today's children television is part of the environment. Adults who can recall a time when there was no television have a somewhat different perspective on it. To understand the role of television in our society and its impact on our personal lives, we must look at the phenomenon of "tele-vision" (or seeing-at-a-distance) as the culmination of a long process of development.

Topics for discussion:

How does TV extend our senses of sight and hearing beyond their natural limits?

In what ways is our personal world larger today than if we were living 100 years ago?

Name as many ways as you can think of to send "tele-graphic" messages.

The evolution of telecommunication

Telecommunication began when prehistoric man first let out a cry which could be heard from a distance. He had found a way to give permanence to his communications by drawing pictures, and in time, symbols. But he also wanted to make news travel over distance.

The first example of telecommunication seems to have been a system of call posts: A man was posted at every hundred yards along a route; the first man shouted a message to the second, who shouted it to the third and so forth. King Xerxes provided Persia with such long chain posts that messages could be relayed from one end of the empire to the other within 24 hours.

The word "telegraphy" (or distant writing) was first used by the Greeks to mean any method by which messages could be transmitted to distant places by agreed signals. Man has always experimented with different forms of telegraphy. The earliest form consisted of rhythmic drumbeats, still used in the jungles of Africa and South America. Another form was fire telegraphy, used by the ancient Mediterranean civilizations. In Jerusalem, three thousand years ago, it was customary to light torches on the Mount of Olives and wave them to answering torchlights on the surrounding mountain tops.¹

Another way that news traveled was by means of runners. Our modern marathon races commemorate the feat of Pheidippides, the most famous news reporter of Ancient Greece, who in 490 B.C. ran more than 20 miles to announce the Greek victory at Marathon. According to tradition he arrived in Athens, gasped out his story, and died on the spot of exhaustion.



Densberg/OCDs

Find out:

How did important, historic messages get transmitted in the days before TV? For example, Marco Polo's arrival in China, the discovery of America, the defeat of the Spanish Armada, the assassination of President Lincoln, the start of World War I.

We have our own famous news reporter in Paul Revere, who on the night of April 8, 1775, galloped out of Boston toward Concord to warn the villagers that the British troops were on their way to seize their arms and supplies. The fighting that took place the next day was the first battle of the American Revolution, and the *Gazette* of Salem was the first newspaper to carry the account. It appeared two days after the fighting.

By the beginning of the 19th century, news still traveled by horse and sailing ship. It began to speed up with the advent of the train and steamship. Then in 1844 news began to flash over a wire from city to city within seconds.² Samuel Morse's telegraph system, together with Thomas Edison's electric light bulb and Alexander Graham Bell's telephone, opened the era of high speed telecommunication, and thereby revolutionized society. Before modern technology the size of a community was limited by the area over which messages could be sent. With electronic communication people could communicate over great distances, and they could do so instantaneously. By the end of the 19th century, there were telegraphic connections with all parts of the world.

Find out:

What do you know about the precursors of TV and their inventors?

Electronic telecommunication

The telegraph is based on the simple concept that wires conduct electric energy. It was already known how to generate electric energy in small amounts. Morse's basic problem was to make energy convey information through modulation. The method of modulation he used was merely to turn the current on and off. Accordingly, the Morse Code is based on two signals — dots and dashes — which depend on the *length of time* the current is on or off.

The telephone eliminated the necessity of encoding and decoding messages. Alexander Graham Bell's instrument transmitted actual voices by changing sound vibrations into varying spurts of electric energy which moved through a wire, causing thin metal reeds at the other end to vibrate and thus reproduce the original sound.



The next step in the development of electronic telecommunications was the discovery that electronic signals could be transmitted not only through wires but also through the air. It was the Italian, Guglielmo Marconi, who perfected the wireless transmitter, thus making it possible for sounds and later pictures to be sent through the air.



Like visible light, radio waves are a form of energy that can travel through space. To use radio energy for communication, four fundamental steps are necessary:

- Radio energy must be generated.
- Information must be encoded through modulation of this energy.
- The modulated signal must be detected on the receiving end.
- The signal must be demodulated and thus recovered in its original form.³

The growth of radio

The "wireless" was patented in England in 1897 and first applied to ship-to-shore communications. Ships as far as 36 miles apart could signal one another by wireless. In 1899 the Marconi Wireless Company of America ("American Marconi") was established. Among its employees was David Sarnoff, the young wireless transmitter, who in 1912 had picked up the faint signals which said: "SS *Titanic* ran into iceberg. Sinking fast." 15,000 people froze to death in the waters of the Atlantic because the wireless operator on the *Carpathia*, a ship only 15 miles away, had gone off duty with no one to replace him. The tragedy dramatized the need for more efficient wireless service. It also brought David Sarnoff into prominence. Under him, as president of the Radio Corporation of America (RCA), the parent company of NBC, commercial radio came into existence.

Music was first broadcast on radio in 1906. The world's first news broadcast of the presidential election returns was heard on November 7, 1916. In 1924 Americans heard the Republican and Democratic conventions "live." And in 1937 a radio operator made radio history when he reported the explosion of the German airship, the *Hindenburg*, as it was actually bursting into flames in the air.

Television eclipses radio

Meanwhile television was being developed. If sound could be broadcast, why not optical images? Television was a combined effort in-

Resources:

Ray, Joanne. *Careers with a Television Station* (Minneapolis: Lerner Publications, 1973).



Nunnally/CODs

volving numerous inventions plus huge sums of money and organizational support. Among its direct contributors were the inventors: Paul Nipkow, K.F. Braun, V.K. Zworykin, Boris Rosing, Philo T. Farnsworth, A. A. Campbell-Swinton, John L. Baird.

On April 7, 1927 the first "live" long distance television broadcast took place. A talking image of Herbert Hoover (then U.S. Secretary of Commerce) was transmitted from Washington, D.C. to New York. The picture was seen on a screen in the New York laboratory of the Bell Telephone Company.

Two years later, Dr. E. P. Alexanderson publicly demonstrated his receiver, the first prototype TV set in the United States.

Television was ready for commercial use, but the stock market crash of 1929 brought its dissemination to a standstill. In July of 1930, the National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC), under David Sarnoff, opened an experimental TV station (W2XBS) in New York City. A year later, its competitor, the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS), under William Paley, established its experimental station (W2XAB). It was on CBS' station that the first TV news event occurred: the 1932 Election Night report of FDR's defeat of Herbert Hoover.⁴

Mass communication

Radio and TV broadcasting are remarkable not just because news of an event can be transmitted *instantaneously*, but also because it can be received by millions of people *simultaneously*. It is this which makes broadcasting a mass communications medium.

"Mass communication" means several things:

- large audiences
- undifferentiated audience composition
- message reproduction
- rapid distribution
- low cost per consumer

The daily newspaper, developed in the second half of the nineteenth century, was the first of the mass media. Before the existence of cheap paper, high speed printing, rapid distribution methods and mass marketing, a book had great intrinsic value. Usually it dealt with serious matters and was too expensive for most people to afford. Newspapers, on the other hand, were meant for mass consumption by mass audiences.

A mass audience is both large and heterogeneous. The individuals composing it have nothing in common beyond the fact of receiving identical messages at the same time.⁵

Big business

Broadcasting was a genuine innovation, but because of its use of spectrum space (radio and TV frequencies) to transmit messages to the public, there were no precedents to indicate how it should be financed and organized. To be financially viable, a way had to be found to pass the cost of producing these messages to the consumer. Early in 1922, the American Telephone and Telegraph Company (AT&T) devised a method. "Toll broadcasting," as this earliest form of advertising was called, was explained in these terms:

We, the telephone company, were to provide no programs. The public was to come in. Anyone who had a message for the world or wished to entertain was to come in and pay their money as they would upon coming into a telephone booth, address the world, and go out.

On August 28, 1922, at 5:00 P.M. the WEAF radio station broadcast its first income-producing program: a ten-minute message to the public from a Queensboro Corporation executive to promote the sale of apartments in Jackson Heights:

... Let me enjoin you as you value your health and your hopes and your home happiness, get away from the solid masses of brick, where the meagre opening admitting a slant of sunlight is mockingly called a light shaft, and where children

grow up starved for a run over a patch of grass and the sight of a tree.

Apartments in congested parts of the city have proven failures. The word neighbor is an expression of peculiar irony – a daily joke . . .

The fact is, however, that apartment homes on the tenant-ownership plan can be secured by . . .⁶

Another method to finance broadcasting was through syndication. News syndication had been used by newspapers since 1850 to share the cost of the "wire services" – Associated Press (AP) and the United Press International (UPI). Broadcasters made use of these "wire services." In addition, they began to syndicate the programs they produced to cover their expenses.

The need for syndication caused the major stations in the country to affiliate with one of the two major networks, NBC and CBS. Thus the broadcast network was able to make a single program service simultaneously available over a larger geographic area than any one station could cover.⁷

Topics for discussion:

- Name some other forms of mass communication.
- What does the first ad in broadcast history tell you about New York in 1922?
- How are ads different nowadays?

Government regulation

The first comprehensive piece of radio legislation in the United States was passed as a direct result of the *Titanic* disaster. The Radio Act of 1912 empowered the Secretary of Commerce and Labor to issue station licenses to American citizens and to specify the wavelengths to be used. By 1922-23, however, it was impossible to receive any kind of consistent signal. Broadcasting began to demand more stations, and interferences were a common phenomenon. The result was the Radio Act of 1927, later incorporated in the Communications Act of 1934.

The Communications Act of 1934 reenacted the Radio Act of 1927 and added new provisions for jurisdiction over interstate and foreign wire communication. It also added two members to the Federal Radio Commission (FRC), which became the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).⁵



Assumptions of the radio act

1. The radio waves or channels belong to the people.
2. Broadcasting is a unique service.
3. Service must be equally distributed.
4. Not everyone is eligible to use a channel.
5. Broadcasting is a form of expression protected by the First Amendment.
6. The government has discretionary regulatory power.
7. The government's powers are not absolute.

Resources:

Sydney W. Head, *Broadcasting in America: A Survey of Television and Radio*. New York: Houghton Mifflin and Co., 1972 (for adults).

Erik Barnouw, *Tube of Plenty: The Evolution of American Television*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1975 (for adults).

Lee Polk and Eda LeShan. *The Incredible Television Machine*. New York: Macmillan Company, 1977 (for children junior high and younger).

The Museum of Broadcasting, One East 53rd Street, New York, N.Y., tel. (212) 752-7684

Robert Lewis Shayon, *The Crowd Catchers*, New York: Saturday Review Press, 1973.

Topics for discussion:

Why is it that people who live on the West Coast or in Florida are familiar with the same TV programs as New Yorkers?

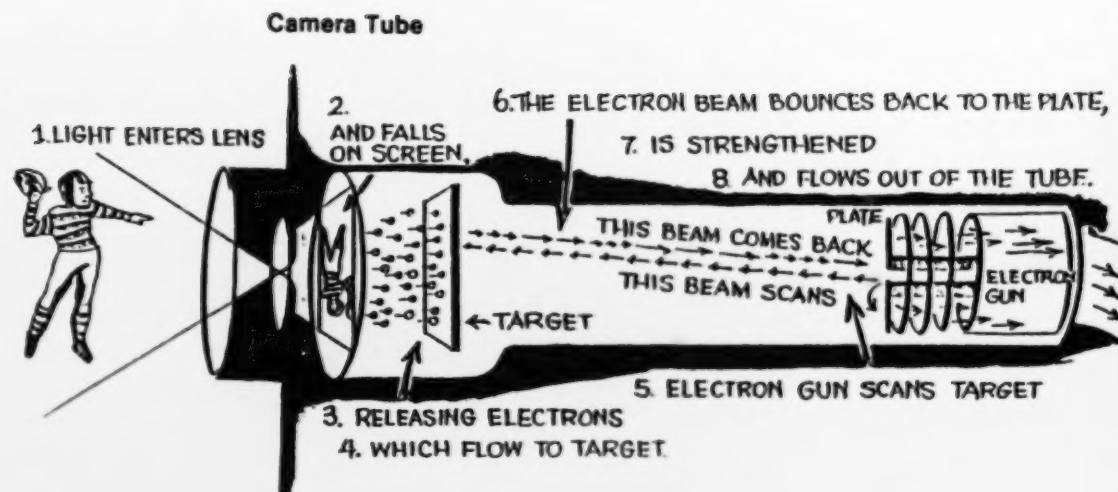
Why is government regulation of public airways necessary?



How TV works

Television is a system of broadcasting in which optical images are translated into electric signals and transmitted by means of wire or radio waves to receivers. The receivers pick up these signals and transform them into pictures on television screens.

Transmitting an image instantaneously across a distance is a concept which seemed like ridiculous science fiction not so long ago. The key to the miracle is the process of electronic scanning.



Jeanne and Robert Benedick/McGraw Hill

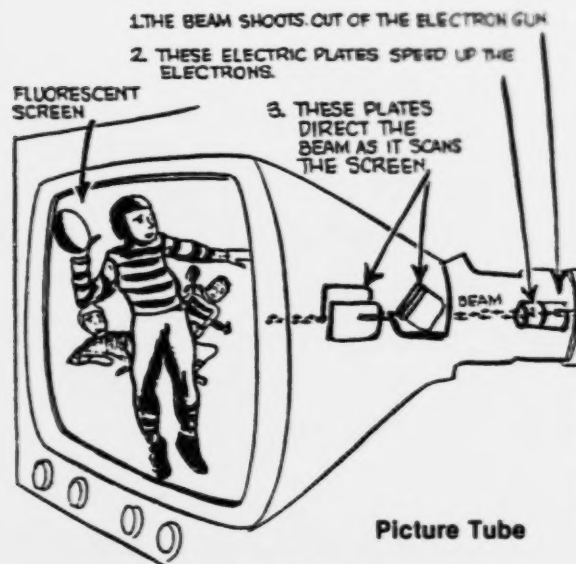
What scanning means

The key to the camera – the system which translates optical image into electronic signal – is the screen (No. 2 in the diagram) which is made of a photoelectrically sensitive material. When a bright light strikes one side of this material, it produces a correspondingly strong electrical reaction on the other side. A dim light causes little reaction. The varying intensity of light in the original optical image thus stimulates a variation of intensity in the flow of electrons from the screen to the target plate (No. 4).

The electron gun (No. 5) shoots a stream of electrons at the target plate in a pattern similar to the way one's eyes scan a page of print, from left to right and from top to bottom. As the

electron beam scans the target plate and bounces back to the gun, it is strengthened or weakened by the intensity of the pattern of electrons on the plate. This variation in the beam becomes the video signal transmitted to the receiver, the home TV set.

The scanning electron beam scans the image for variations of black, white or grey 525 times. It scans every other line (262½ lines) in 1/60th of a second, odd lines first. Then it goes back again and scans the other 262½ lines. The merger of these 2 fields makes a 525-line frame. At this rate 30 pictures (frames) per second are generated, giving the appearance of continuous motion.



Jeanne and Robert Benedick/McGraw Hill

In the receiver the same process occurs in reverse. The electron beam scans the surface of the fluorescent screen. Where the signal is strong it generates a bright spot on the screen, and where the signal is weak the spot is dim. The total pattern of spots recreates the pattern of light and dark in the original optical image.

Find out:

Where do the shows that you like to watch originate?

Why is it important that a transmitter be in a high place?

Do you know where the transmitters of your favorite TV stations are located?

How are TV waves different from radio waves?

How does the curvature of the earth pose a problem for TV broadcasting?

These pictures or electrical signals are transmitted by way of a tall antenna located on top of a mountain or a very tall building (like the Empire State Building). The *transmitter* generates the power so that electro-magnetic waves can carry the signals through the air to individual TV antennas for reception on the home screen.

Direct broadcasts generally go no farther than 70 miles. TV waves (unlike radio waves) travel in very short, straight lines. To send a signal over long distances, a network of microwave relay stations and special "coaxial" cables are needed.

Resources:

Beal, George. *See Inside a Television Studio*. New York: Wtts, Inc., 1978.

In the past 30 years, the technology related to the transmission of pictures has grown in diversity and complexity.

SATELLITE

One limitation of TV broadcasting over the air is that direct broadcasts generally go no farther than 70 miles. TV waves (unlike radio waves) travel in very short straight lines. To send a signal over larger distances, a network of microwave relay stations and special "coaxial" cables was needed.

There are now other ways to overleap the horizon barrier. In 1962, NASA launched Telstar and Early Bird, making it possible to transmit major news events "live" to overseas television stations.



First Field
1/60th Sec

Second Field
1/60th Sec

Complete Frame
1/30th Sec

David McCutchen/Videos-Info

THE VERY SHORT WAVES
THAT CARRY THE TV
SIGNAL STOP
AT THE EARTH'S
CURVE.



LONG RADIO WAVES BOUNCE
AROUND THE EARTH

Jeanne and Robert Benedick/McGraw Hill

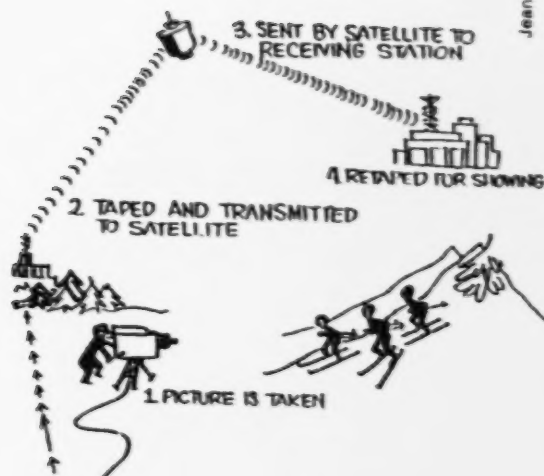


EARLY BIRD



TELSTAR

Jeanne and Robert Binedick/McGraw Hill

**Find out:**

Can you name some TV programs which have been transmitted via satellite?

CABLE TV

Originally conceived as a means of overcoming some of the technical limitations of the TV signal, Community Antenna Television (CATV) or CABLE TV has opened television to a vast panoply of specialized and limited interest programming, as well as to a variety of non-video services such as education, data transmission, and home security.

The coaxial cable connecting the home TV set to the station is able to carry 30 possible programs instead of just 13. Moreover, the same cable can be connected to a computer for data transmission, or connected to a home console for two-way communication.

In effect, the combination of cable, earth station, and satellite is almost the reinvention of television as we have known it for the past 30 years. With all of this technological advance, the action on the little screen has taken a dramatic change for young viewers. Entire networks devoted to children have begun to operate nationwide. The programs are, of course, only beamed to paying subscribers. One network, Warner Amex's *Nickelodeon*, offers thirteen hours of programming daily for 2 million subscribers. UA-Columbia's children's network is called *Calliope* and offers some very rarified fare for young people.

Resources:

Brown, Les. "From the Air: Programs by Satellite and Cable," *New York Times*, February 17, 1981.

Freund, Charles Paul. "Cable TV: The Progress," *Washington Journalism Review*, May 1980, pp. 16-19.

Hill, Doug. "Burying Their Hatchets—And Joining the Revolution," *Panorama*, May 1981, pp. 65-69.

Curry, Jack. "Plugging into the '80s," *New York Daily News*, November 5, 1979, p. 5 ("Leisure").

Schwartz, Tony. "Have the Networks Responded to Cable?" *New York Times*, June 6, 1982 (Sect. 2), p. 35.

Klein, Paul L. "The Coming Shake-up in Television," *U.S. News and World Report*, December 14, 1981, pp. 57-ff.

Machalaha, Daniel. "Publishers Try to Find Best Strategy to Handle Rival Field of Cable TV," *Wall Street Journal*, May 17, 1982, pp. 1-20 (passive).

COLOR

Color TV is yet another significant development in TV signal reception. In contrast to regular TV, color TV transmits and superimposes three images instead of one. The camera lens focuses the picture through a series of mirrors and lenses onto three separate tubes. Each tube then converts its own color light rays (red, blue, and green) into electrical impulses, which are amplified and transmitted.

Find out:

Why is color TV more expensive than black and white?

What are the advantages of video?

VIDEOTAPE

Many historians of television bemoan the loss of great programs from the 50s which are lost because no record was kept. Videotape did not exist in those days, and few programs were recorded on film. Video, or magnetic tape picture recording, is a remarkably versatile adjunct to television. It is a storage medium as well as a creative resource. Because of videotape, the techniques of electronic editing, copying slow motion, stop motion, and instant replay are possible.¹⁴

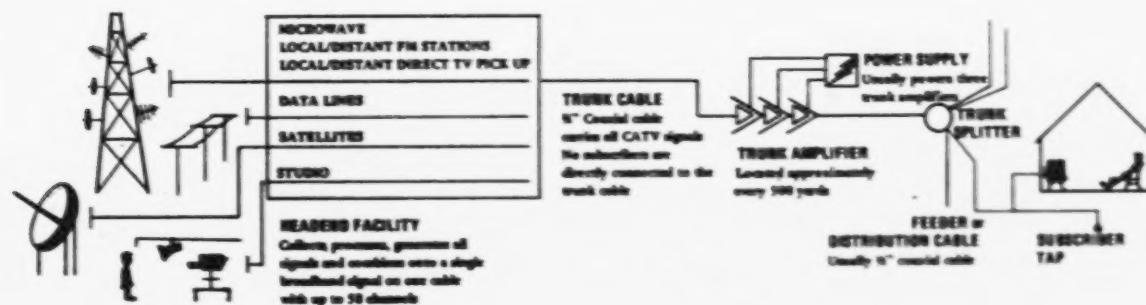
Implications for schools

Cable, satellite, video disks and video cassettes have all become a reality so quickly that no one is sure yet what their effects will be on classroom teaching. Certainly, new and improved technologies, such as cable networks, individual school satellites and two-way television systems, will put TV at the disposal of teachers in new ways. However, at this point the software has not yet caught up with available hardware.

First, the TV industry itself must decide which technologies will prove profitable. Then education may climb on for a free ride.

According to an article in the April 20, 1980 education section of the *New York Times*.

How cable TV works



The changing economics of television may spur the growth of that software. Instead of forcing educational programs to "earn their keep" on the 13 crowded, competitive over-the-air bands by appealing to a mass audience with varied needs, cable television offers anywhere from 12 to 30 stations that cry out for more programs targeted to specific audiences — beginning algebra here, advanced algebra there, auto maintenance there. And pre-packaged videodisks free teachers from the tyranny of over-the-air television schedules that may not mesh with their class timetable.

The future of TV

Tremendous changes are taking place in the broadcast media. With hundreds of new electronic highways made available by Cable TV and communications satellite, there could be as many as 20 national networks by 1990.

Approximately 22 million American homes now subscribe to Cable TV. Many also pay for Home Box Office or Wometco, an additional channel of commercial-free, uninterrupted movies, sports events and other specials. "Superstations," like WTCG in Atlanta, are combining satellite distribution with cable delivery. In Columbus, Ohio a system of two-way, interactive TV called Qube enables viewers to vote "yes" or "no" to what they are seeing.

Other innovations like the video cassette recorder (VCR) enable viewers to record programs off the air for later viewing, while video disk players can translate information on a plastic record into a better TV picture than can be obtained from normal transmission. As viewers have more and more choices of *what* to watch, as well as *when* to watch, the three commercial networks will lose control over the broadcast schedule. Sponsors will be less eager to pay \$134,000 for a 30-second spot on *Mork and Mindy* — a price based on a guarantee that 30 to

The curriculum of the future is most likely to consist of fields of inquiry from which students learn how to learn about that which is known . . . This means, of course, the introduction of many new fields of inquiry, of which media ecology is the most important.

Neil Postman

40 million people are tuned in to that program. Even the Nielsen ratings may become irrelevant, in view of the capability of a cable system like Qube to pinpoint accurately the number of viewers.¹¹

It may also no longer be necessary to program to a mass audience. The new wealth of TV channels may fracture the audience, making television an industry similar to magazine publishing. This would allow for the growth of special interest channels, 24-hour news stations, educational channels. It could lead to a children's TV service for special age groups and needs: for the deaf, the hospitalized and disturbed, the gifted and talented. Opportunities might even be provided for youngsters to make their own TV programs.¹²

The commercial possibilities could be just as exciting. Through television, stores could display their wares to the customer at home, and two-way transmission would enable the viewer to select what to buy. A dial-a-movie system would give access to a film library containing thousands

of titles from which to choose.¹³ Social situations could also be arranged for people who might want to get together via television.

In today's society, the various media have specific roles: we use television for immediacy and visual stimulation; newspapers for detail and interpretation; magazines for background and opinion; radio for local news and discussion.¹⁴ There may come a time, however, when television may take the place of all the media. The trend is toward the integration of separate communication enterprises into some kind of "cable-video-tape-library-computer-retrieval-closed-circuit-television combination."¹⁵

For activity and discussion:

If you had your own TV station to do with whatever you wanted, what would you do?

Design your own program schedule for your imaginary TV station.



In 1883, a series of visions of the future was published in Paris under the title *The Twentieth Century*. The artists of the time predicted many electronic developments which we take for granted today. Here we see two examples — a woman shopping by “tele” and a woman sharing a closed circuit tea party with her friends. The booklet also foresaw long-distance phona-vision, instant news flashes from around the world.



Teaching Strategy Twelve: *Communication*

Grades K-2 (Picture language)

Objective:

- to communicate through images and words

Materials:

- flashcards and pictures
- drawing materials

Procedure:

1. Hold up pictures depicting various faces. Ask the children to call out what these faces are saying.
2. Ask the students to draw faces that say: "I'm afraid, upset, hurt, pleased, bored, hungry, sad, puzzled."
3. Hold up examples of familiar road signs, and ask the students to call out what each sign says.
4. Ask each child to make a picture that says something. Each picture will be shown to the other children, who will guess what it says.



Grades 3-4 (Old ways of sending messages)

Objective:

- to learn about communications systems of the past

Materials:

- textbooks
- art materials
- props

Procedure:

1. The teacher asks the students what form(s) of communication they would use if they wanted to communicate with someone who lived far away. (e.g., letter, telegram, telephone, ham radio, tape).
2. Discuss communications systems among the cave people, Native Americans, American colonists, and others (e.g., smoke signals, drums, carrier pigeon, pony express, beacon lights).
3. Divide the class into groups, each group in charge of researching one old form of communication over distance.
4. Each group will produce an arts related project illustrating that form of communication. It can include a skit, a drawing, clay figures, a poem.

Grades 5-6 (Telecommunicating)

Objective:

- to learn about electronic communications media

Materials:

- books on telecommunications media
- drawing materials

Procedure:

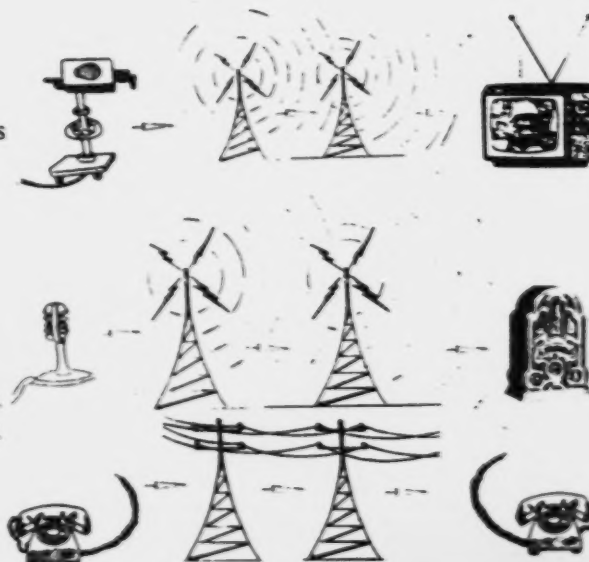
1. Introduce and define *telecommunication*. Ask the class to name words with the prefix *tele*.

television	telescope
telephone	teleprompter
telegraph	teletext
telepathy	telemeter
	teletype

2. Ask the students to define each word, using the dictionary where necessary, and to look for new words beginning with *tele*. (Radio and phonograph are also telecommunications media, however.)

3. Divide the class into groups to do research on the various forms of telecommunications.

- One group may research the differences between wired and wireless communication systems (telephone and teletype versus radio and television).



- One group may research "electronic pollution" of the airwaves

- One group may research the inventors of the telephone, telegraph, radio, and television. What do these inventors have in common?

- One group may make a mock-up of a wired transmission system (a telegraph is the simplest).

- One group may make posters showing how TV pictures are transmitted.

- Each group should be ready to share its findings, project, or artwork with other members of the class.



Grades 7-9 (Sources of information)

Objectives:

- to become aware of the various available sources of information
- to understand the importance of communication

Materials:

- writing materials

Procedure:

1. Open with the question: Do you think you know more this week than you did last week? If so, what more do you know? Discuss new things learned.

2. Ask the students to list where they got their new knowledge or information; from what sources: *i.e.*,

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ teacher | ☐ leaflet |
| ☐ parent | ☐ letter |
| ☐ friends | ☐ sign |
| ☐ television | ☐ radio |
| ☐ poster | ☐ recording |
| ☐ magazine | ☐ video-tape |
| ☐ comic book | ☐ audio-tape |
| ☐ movies | ☐ bulletin board notice |
| ☐ newsletter | ☐ book |
| ☐ container or wrapper | ☐ newspaper |
| ☐ group discussion | ☐ pictures |
| ☐ lecture | ☐ play |
| ☐ billboard | ☐ painting |
| ☐ label | ☐ poem |
| ☐ pamphlet | ☐ song |

3. For discussion: Which sources of information did you know were available to you? Which source do you use the most? Which could you do without? Explain. Which would you not have had had you lived 100 years ago?

4. How long do you think you could survive without receiving communications? Suppose you couldn't see traffic lights or hear car honks or fire alarms... Ask the students to trace their experience of the day before and to make a chart with squares, filling in the time of day, the communication received, and the source.

5. Loneliness is often the result of a lack of *receptivity* to communication. Ask the students to write a short composition entitled "Loneliness."

Class Project

Cable TV has made a big difference in the lives of people living in remote rural areas. As a class project read the one-act play *Trifles** and explain how Cable Television might have prevented the tragedy. Suppose the police found a smashed TV set? How would that have affected the investigation?

* by Susan Glaspell)



A glossary of useful TV terms

affiliate a local station that contracts with a network for a specific period of programming

allocation the Federal Communication Commission's (FCC) specific assignment of frequency and power to a TV station

blocking the working out, by the director, of the positions and movements of actors and equipment

block programming the scheduling of programs of similar appeal back to back to keep viewers from switching to another channel

boom a long-arm crane, mounted on a wheel base, that extends a microphone or camera into the air to pick up sound from an off-stage position or to get camera shots from a high angle

cable TV (Community Antenna Television) a service that picks up television signals in the air and brings them into subscribers' homes by coaxial cable, improving reception and making available a wider program choice

CPB Corporation for Public Broadcasting, created by the Public Broadcasting Act of 1967 to distribute federal funds for the development of non-commercial broadcasting

dissolve a transition from one camera to another in which the first camera fades out its scene and the second camera fades in another scene

dolly the movement of a camera on wheels toward or away from a subject; also, the wheeled camera and mount

establishing shot a wide angle camera view that establishes the total scene for the audience

floor manager technical crew member who works on the studio floor relaying commands from the control room to personnel in the studio

freeze frame to stop a film at a single frame, giving the impression of frozen action

go to black Fading a camera to entirely kill a picture quickly or slowly

idiot cards a performer's lines written in large letters on big cards that are held up off-camera but very near it. They are used to avoid the necessity of memorizing lines or to shore up an actor who is insecure in his lines

independent station a local, commercial station not affiliated with any network, specializing in syndicated reruns of former network pro-

grams, films, special events and sports. Independent station audiences are smaller than those of network affiliates, but such stations charge lower rates

instant replay a live-action scene instantly reproduced and shown by video-tape recording, used most frequently in covering sports

lip sync satisfactory matching of an actor's lip movements with the actual voice track; "out of sync" indicates unsatisfactory matching

logo symbol identifying a station or network; also a commercial logo or sponsor identification

mobile unit a traveling control room in a truck which can originate programs remotely from the station's fixed studios; it sends its signals to the station by telephone lines or microwave relays.

montage a rapid progression of shots (film or video) that achieves a specific impact by building up an association of ideas in a free, nonliteral manner; also a composite picture

moviola an instrument that runs film and sound tracks simultaneously for viewing in the editing room by editors and/or producers

NAB *National Association of Broadcasters, the major national group that represents the interests of approximately two-thirds of the owners of commercial TV and radio stations in the United States; it engages in extensive public relations and lobbying for the broadcast industry and administers the NAB code, which sets self-regulatory standards for TV and radio programming and commercials*

NAEB *National Association of Educational Broadcasters whose members are noncommercial TV and radio stations and individuals in the field of education*

National Arbitron *a television rating system based on telephone calls to approximately 1,500 homes every half hour; viewers are asked what they are watching, and the results are made available to subscribers (networks, stations, sponsors, advertising agencies, etc.) overnight*

NET *National Educational Television, the first and major supplier of non-commercial television programs, financed heavily by the Ford Foundation and more recently by funds from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) and large corporations*

Nielsen *a national rating system operated by the A.C. Nielsen Company which measures audience ratings by a device (audimeter) installed in the sets of a sample of 1,200 homes representing the total national TV audience; the device records what sets are tuned into what programs in any selected time period, but it does not tell who is watching or whether the viewers like or dislike what they are seeing; results are available to subscribers in national and regional ratings a few weeks after each telecast*

pan *cameraman's movement of the camera horizontally to right or left from one part of a scene to another*

PBS *Public Broadcasting Service, the national distributor of programs for public broadcasting (non-commercial, educational TV stations)*

pilots *the initial films or videotapes of a projected series shown to networks, advertising agencies, and sponsors to demonstrate the appeal of the series*

prime-time *the peak period of TV viewing during the day, morning, afternoon, and evening, particularly the evening hours from 7:30 to 11:00 P.M., New York time, when the largest numbers of households have their sets tuned in*

PSA *public service announcement*

PTV *public television, formerly known as educational television*

reaction shot *the capture by the camera of an actor's strong emotional reaction to a stimulus*

running part *a continuous part in a soap opera*

share of audience *the percentage of total TV sets in use determined by ratings services to be tuned to a particular program during a given time period*

signature *(theme) the musical, audio, or visual symbol that identifies a network, station, sponsor, or program*

slate *a board on which is written the title of a program, its identifying number, and the names of the producer and director; it is held up for the camera to note before a program, or in production before each "take"*

sneak *to fade in the picture or sound slowly*

split screen a divided screen in which different settings or actors in different settings are placed alongside each other, as when two people talking long distance on the telephone to each other are seen side by side

sponsor a client buying advertising time

station break the time between programs when a station identifies itself and delivers commercials provided by local or national sponsors

stock shots motion picture film of a general or historical nature that may be purchased from film libraries

super to superimpose information from one camera over information shown by another camera so that both are seen together

take a unit of film shot in film production; also a command from the director to the technical director of a TV program to put the picture seen by a particular camera on the air

talkback a private microphone/speaker system connecting the control room to the studio

TD technical director

teleprompter a device mounted on a camera or near it that runs a performer's lines on a paper roll at a speed that accommodates his own style and speed of delivery

UHF ultra-high frequency: a television station in the range of channels 14 to 83

VHF very high frequency: channels 2 to 13

voice over an off-camera narration or voice

VTR videotape recording that combines pictures with sound on large reels of magnetic tape

wing it to improvise camera shots in an unrehearsed situation

zoom a change, fast or slow, in the focal length of a camera lens, which takes the viewer to or away from a scene or a subject

Footnotes: Chapter 5

¹Leonard de Vries, *The Book of Telecommunications* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1972), pp. 13-14, adapted.

²Sam and Beryl Epstein, *The First Book of News* (New York: Franklin Watts, Inc., 1965), pp. 3, 27, 36-38, adapted.

³Sidney Head, *Broadcasting in America* (New York: Houghton Mifflin and Co., 1972), pp. 24, 108-109, adapted.

⁴Erik Barnouw, *Tube of Plenty* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), pp. 30-31, adapted.

⁵Head, pp. 105-106, adapted.

⁶Barnouw, pp. 43-45, adapted.

⁷Head, pp. 109, 167-168, 87-88.

⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 160-161.

⁹Jeanne and Robert Benedick, *Television Works Like This* (New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1959), pp. 34-37, adapted.

¹⁰Head, pp. 77-80, 89, 96.

¹¹Desmond Smith, "Television Enters the 80's," *New York Times Magazine*, (August 19, 1979), pp. 16-18, 20-21, 66-68, adapted.

¹²Evelyn Kaye, *The Family Guide to Children's Television*, (p. 29).

¹³Joseph F. Littell, ed., *Coping with the Mass Media*, p. 148.

¹⁴*Coping with Television*, p. 20.

¹⁵Head, p. 98.

Appendix B. Reference Material about TV and Children

Television is a fact of life in our society. We have to teach our children to live in a world of television. That doesn't mean that teachers can't teach basic skills. It is not an either-or situation. But unless educators find ways to use television in their classrooms, they will find television leaving them far behind.

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Media and Methods*

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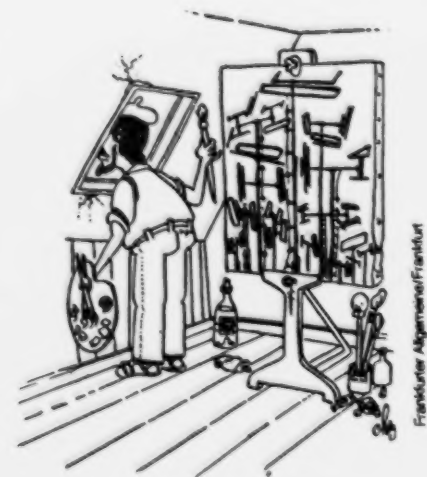
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